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DARIUS GOFF.

HISTORICAL ADDRESSES,  
/

POEM,

AND OTHER EXERCISES

AT THE

CELEBRATION OF THE

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH

ANNIVERSARY

OF THE SETTLEMENT

OF

REHOBOTH, MASS.

//

HELD OCTOBER 3, 1894.

EDITED BY THOMAS W. BICKNELL, A. M. LL. D.

## INTRODUCTORY.

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At the annual meeting of the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society, held in March, 1894, Esek H. Pierce, one of the Board of Trustees of said Society, moved that Rehoboth should celebrate its 250th anniversary during the present year. After some discussion it was voted to recommend a celebration of the 250th anniversary of the settlement of the town and a committee was chosen, consisting of Esek H. Pierce, Nathaniel B. Horton, George N. Goff, William W. Blanding, Reuben Bowen and John C. Marvel, to take such action thereon as might seem most advisable. At a meeting of this Committee held in June, 1894, it was voted to call a meeting of the stockholders of the Antiquarian Society, to take further action relative to such a celebration. The meeting of the stockholders was held in July when it was voted to hold a Celebration as proposed and Two Hundred dollars were appropriated for that purpose. A committee was appointed consisting of Esek H. Pierce, Nathaniel B. Horton, Edgar Perry, George N. Goff, William W. Blanding, Gustavus B. Peck and Elisha Davis to carry out the purposes of the Society in regard to this anniversary. The Committee organized immediately by the choice of Esek H. Pierce as Chairman and Edgar Perry as Secretary and arranged for the celebration to be held on the Third day of October, 1894.

# REHOBOTH

## IN BRIEF REVIEW.

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BY EDGAR PERRY.

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What is now Bristol county originally consisted of four towns—Taunton, settled in 1639, Rehoboth, 1644, Dartmouth, 1652, and Freetown in 1683. The original limits of Taunton included Norton, Easton, Mansfield, Dighton, Berkeley and Raynham; Dartmouth included Westport, Fairhaven, New Bedford and Acushnet; Freetown included Fall River; and Rehoboth included the towns of Attleboro, North Attleboro, Seekonk and Swansea in Massachusetts, and in Rhode Island all the lands east of the Blackstone river and Narragansett Bay, namely, Cumberland, Pawtucket, East Providence and Barrington.

The present year marks the 250th anniversary of the settlement of ancient Rehoboth, and the 200th anniversary of the incorporation of the town of Attleboro.

During the first 50 years subsequent to their settlement through the more dangerous of the Indian wars, the towns of Rehoboth and the Rehoboth North Purchase, or Attleboro, had a common history. It was second in interest and importance to that of no town in Massachusetts though their proximity to Narragansett Bay and their consequent social and industrial relations with Rhode Island

has not gained for their achievements the recognition in some part of the state which is accorded their sister towns on the Atlantic.

### Interesting Facts.

It may not be generally known that William Blackstone, the first settler of Shawmut, or Boston, was also the first settler of Rehoboth; that Col. Thomas Willett, the first mayor of New York, was a Rehoboth pioneer, and is buried within the ancient limits of that town; that Rehoboth was the frontier town of Plymouth colony during King Philip's war, and that the first blood and the final overthrow of the conflict were seen within its boundaries; that Rev. Samuel Newman, Rehoboth's first pastor, wrote by the light of pine knots in the wilderness, the first complete concordance of the Bible, which is still one of the best; that the first free public school supported by general taxation was created by the foresight of Rehoboth freemen; that when the two colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay united, Rehoboth, the largest town in Plymouth, and Boston, the largest town in Massachusetts Bay colony, had a sharp contest to see which should have the honor of being the capital of the new commonwealth, and that Boston won the prize only by a few votes.

### Settlement of Rehoboth.

The first purchase of Rehoboth land was made of Massasoit in 1641, and embraced a tract 10 miles square, comprising the present towns of Rehoboth, Seekonk, Pawtucket and East Providence. The second purchase was the tract called English Wannamoiset, forming a part of Swansea and Barrington. The third and last purchase was a tract embracing the present towns of Attleboro, North Attleboro and Cumberland, R. I., known as the Rehoboth

North Purchase. Taken together, the territory had many advantages to recommend it for settlement. It had almost every variety of soil, was fertile and well wooded, and, on the side toward Narragansett bay there were large, treeless expanses, admirably fitted for tillage or grazing, known then, as now, as Seekonk plains. This rare advantage, with the fine water power furnished by the Blackstone river, and the ample harbor provided by Narragansett bay, certainly gave to the new territory promises of success and prosperity which few towns in Massachusetts could boast.

The first entry on page 1, volume 1 of the Rehoboth records, is dated Oct. 24, 1643. It relates to the doings of the first of the original planters of Rehoboth, and was held in Weymouth. The proprietors voted that they would all occupy their Rehoboth lots with their families next year, namely 1644, and provided, as a spur to the pioneer spirit, that if any failed to do so, they should forfeit their lots. There were a few men who took up farms here and there in "Seaconk" or Rehoboth in 1641 and 1642, but there seems to have been no organization of the settlers, until 1643, no occupation of the new territory with the families, churches and schools until 1644.

The exodus from Weymouth took place early in 1644, and was led by Rev. Samuel Newman, at the head of his flock. On July 5, the inhabitants met near what is now East Providence village, and signed the following compact:

"We, whose names are underwritten, being by the providence of God, inhabitants of Seaconk, intending here to settle, do covenant and bind ourselves one to another, to subject ourselves to nine persons \* \* \* \* and to assist them according to our ability and estate, and to give timely notice unto them of any such thing as in our con-



science may prove dangerous to the plantation, and this combination to continue until we shall subject ourselves jointly to some other government."

The significant thing about this compact is, that the proprietors considered themselves entirely independent. Their governing, legislative and judicial powers were vested in the committee of nine persons, and every settler reserved not only the right, but imposed upon himself the duty of giving this authoritative body such advice as he might deem expedient. It is hard to conceive of a more perfect democracy than that. Their autonomy, however, did not last long. Both Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies regarded the flourishing settlement with covetous eyes, and both, in the secrecy of their official chambers, laid claim to it. In 1645 the commissioners of the united colonies assigned them to Plymouth court and they were incorporated by the scriptural name of Rehoboth, signifying "room." It was selected by Rev. Mr. Newman, who said: "The Lord hath made room for us."

### Town Divisions.

The first division of the town was caused by religious differences, a party of Baptists withdrawing from Parson Newman's church and founding the first Baptist church in Massachusetts in Swansea. The town of Swansea was incorporated in 1677, and then included within its limits the present towns of Somerset, Barrington and the greater part of Warren, R. I.

The second departure from the parent settlement on Seekonk plain was toward the north, and was made in 1666. These pioneers were the settlers of the Rehoboth North Purchase and the founders of the town of Attleboro. This

northern colony, including then the present towns of Attleboro, Cumberland and North Attleboro, was under the jurisdiction of Rehoboth until Oct. 19, 1694, when it was incorporated as the town of Attleboro.

The third division, which reduced the town to its present territorial limits, was made in 1812, when the then existing town of Rehoboth, which extended westward to the Blackstone river and Narraganset bay, was divided into two nearly equal parts, the western portion taking the Indian name of Seekonk.

Seekonk remained a most influential and promising township until the western portion of its land was transferred to the State of Rhode Island by the establishment of the new line between the states. Rehoboth and Seekonk people have always felt that this fixing of state boundaries, robbing them as it did of the very portion of their domain which had invited the earliest settlers, was an act justified by no sound policy, private or public, nor by any substantial claim of title, either in history or justice.

### Indian Conflicts.

King Philip's war, the greatest of Indian conflicts, and one which menaced not merely the liberty but the very existence of the colonists, began and ended within the limits of ancient Rehoboth. All this region was originally in the domain of Massasoit, the fast friend of the English. It was inherited by the son, Wamsutta, and from him passed to his brother Metacomet, or King Philip. The proximity of Rehoboth to King Philip's headquarters at Mt. Hope, and the fact of its being the heritage of his forefathers, exposed this frontier settlement to the brunt of savage ferocity and vengeance. In apprehension of dangers

the colonists were gathered into three garrisons. The first, Woodcock's garrison, was located in North Attleboro on the site of the old Hatch house, and a portion of the building is still standing. The second garrison was at Seekonk Common, and stood where the present ancient house of Phanuel Bishop now is. The third of the three houses was none other than the residence of the famous Baptist divine, John Myles, and this is standing intact to-day near Myles' bridge in Swansea. Its walls are of stone, several feet in thickness, and altogether it is one of the oldest and most unique houses in the state. The brick for the chimney was brought from England. King Philip's war began with the attack 'at Miles' bridge in Swansea and ended with the capture of Anawan in Rehoboth.

### Educational Progress.

But the chief glory of the earlier settlers of Rehoboth was not their military prowess nor their material prosperity, but their advanced stand in establishing a free public school. Rehoboth claims the honor of originating the idea of free, universal, compulsory public education, maintained by the taxation of all citizens. Its claim is based on the statement of the Digest of the Statutes of Massachusetts, issued in June, 1892. This work, in referring to the act of the Massachusetts Bay colony, passed in 1647, says:

"The act of 1647 make the support of public schools compulsory, and education universal and free. As this was the first law of the kind ever passed by any community of persons, or by any state, Massachusetts may claim the honor of having originated the free public school."

That, according to this compiler, was the record as he found it up to 1647. But he overlooked an ancient document now in the hands of the town clerk of Rehoboth.

It is the record of the second meeting of the proprietors of Rehoboth, held at Weymouth, Dec. 10, 1643. At this meeting they not only placed a schoolmaster fifth in their list of proprietors, but decreed that he should "have a certain portion from each settler for his support." This decree was not only made four years earlier than the act of 1647, but it took more emphatic ground; for in that act the teachers were to be paid "either by the parents or masters of such children, or by the inhabitants in general." Clearly, there was a chance under these provisions, that the support of the school might be shifted from the "inhabitants in general" to those who already had to support the children. There was no such loophole, however, in the Rehoboth measure; that read: "every settler," whether he had children to send or not.

#### RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

The history of the early colonies is the history of the churches. The exigencies of religious affairs decided when and where the branches of the parent church should locate. The first departure from Pastor Newman's church was a forced one, and the dissenting members united with John Myles in founding the First Baptist Church at Swansea. The second exodus was pacific and in 1710 established the first parish in Attleboro, building the church at Oldtown. The third division came in 1721, and founded the present Congregational Church in Rehoboth village. A fourth Congregational parish was created in 1743 by the division of the Attleboro parish, and the building of the "Second Precinct" church at Attleboro Centre. The "Sixth-Principle Baptist" denomination, whose creed is found in the first and second verses in the sixth chapter of Hebrews, founded the Oak Swamp Church, laid the foundation for the Methodist Church at North

Rehoboth, and is to-day represented in the Hornbine Church in the southeastern part of the town. This church was founded in 1753, and is famous for its great "Hornbine clam bake" that dines 3000 or more people every September. The first church established in the present limits of North Attleboro was the present Baptist congregation, and curiously enough, was built in 1769, just 100 years after John Woodcock, the first settler of Attleboro, built his famous tavern. In other words, by a curious decree of fate, North Attleboro had a tavern 100 years before it had a church. If it ever deserved its soubriquet of "Brimstone City," possibly this circumstance may help to explain it.

#### PATRIOTIC SPIRIT.

The military history of Attleboro and Rehoboth is a part of the splendid record which is the glory of every section of Massachusetts. Attleboro men in their Assonet expedition, only missed the honor of opening the revolutionary conflict, the honor that fell to Lexington a few days later, because their military success was so great. Col. Daggett of Attleboro set out on April 9, 1775, for Assonet or Freetown, for the purpose of capturing a lot of British stores and arms and breaking up a band of Royalists that had established itself there.

This was bearing arms against the royal government, and if the colonists' coup had not checked resistance, the first blood of the revolution would have been shed by Attleboro men and in Bristol county.

Attleboro has the honor, however, of anticipating the spirit, and almost the words of the Declaration of Independence, two months before that instrument was executed. At a meeting held in May, 1776, the town sent this re-

markable message to her representative in Congress: "If the Continental Congress should think it best to declare for independency of Great Britian, we unanimously desire you for us to engage to defend them with our lives and our fortunes."

#### MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISES.

The water power furnished by the Ten-Mile river, Palmer's river, Seven-mile river and other streams in the territory of the two towns, caused many manufacturing enterprises to spring up. In Rehoboth, however, the lack of freight facilities and the competition of firms with larger capital have closed them all, except the wood turning establishment of Charles Perry & Co. at Perryville. The town is, however, remarkable for the large industries that have started within its limits. Samuel Slater's first cotton mill started in 1790, though rightly claimed as one of the glories of Pawtucket, was erected on the east side of the Blackstone, and therefore upon Rehoboth soil. The Union Wadding Company of Pawtucket started at Rehoboth village, and the process of making wadding in a continuous sheet was invented there. Dexter Wheeler, pupil of Samuel Slater, and founder of the cotton industries of Fall River, ran his first mill in Rehoboth. One-fourth of the stock of the first mill built in Fall River was owned in Rehoboth.

#### ATTLEBORO'S ADVANCE.

Attleboro's industrial history, unlike Rehoboth, has shown a steady advance. Its largest enterprise, as is well known, is the manufacture of jewelry. It was one of the first places in the country for this industry, and its annual output now amounts to \$10,000,000. It began in handicraft in 1780, and has been developed, until the most



complicated machinery is employed in its production. It is a calling where the work is continually changing with the demands of fashion, and requires a high order of intelligence and much mechanical skill for its execution. The progress of the business previous to the war was not great, but for the past 25 years, and especially since the early seventies, its extension has been rapid.

The first factory of any note was built by Manning Richards in 1811 at North Attleboro. Other well known firms, in the order of their establishment, are as follows: Draper, Tifft & Co., 1821; Ira Richards & Co., 1833; Stephen Richardson & Co., 1837; B. S. Freeman & Co., 1846; F. G. Whitney & Co., 1849; H. F. Barrows & Co., 1853. All these firms were at North Attleboro. Some of the early firms at Attleboro were Bliss & Dean, 1856; Sturdy Bros. & Co., 1859; C. E. Hayward & Co., W. & S. Blackinton, Watson & Newell, R. F. Simmons & Co., W. H. Wilmarth & Co., and other well known houses.

Attleboro was early also in the cotton manufacture. In 1801 Ebenezer Tyler began the manufacture of print cloths at Dodgeville, and this industry has developed into the mammoth Dodgeville and Hebron mills of S. & B. Knight. It is a curious fact that the nucleus of nearly every existing village in Attleboro and North Attleboro was a cotton factory, and with one exception they were all started between 1809 and 1813, as follows: The Beaver Dam mill near Whiting's pond, 1809; Fall's factory, 1809; Mechanics' factory, 1811; Farmers' factory, 1813; City factory at South Attleboro, 1813. The Lanesville mill on Abbott Run was started in 1826 and the Gold Medal Braid Company at Falls Village in 1848. The manufacture of silver ware was begun by the Whiting Manufacturing Company in 1866. The first factory in this country for



the manufacture of buttons was built at what is known as Robinsonville in 1812. The tannery of W. H. Coupe & Co., at South Attleboro, has done a flourishing business since 1860.

There are few towns more desirable for residence than Attleboro. Its schools, its library, its water supply, fire department, many social organizations and the high standard of morality which the town has sustained, all commend it as a town of homes.

#### NOTABLE MEN.

Four notable men were concerned in the settlement of these towns. Rev. Samuel Newman, the leader of the first settlers, was born in Bradford, Eng., in 1600, educated at Oxford, came to this country in 1634, and died in 1663. His greatest work was his Concordance of the Bible. Only a few copies are extant, and one of them is carefully treasured in the British Museum.

Capt. Thomas Willett, successor of Myles Standish as commander of the forces at Plymouth, was largely interested in settling both Swansea and Attleboro, and was the first mayor of New York city. He died at the age of 63, and is buried near Bullock's cove on the shore of Narragansett bay.

William Blackstone, a Non-conformist minister, who was the first settler of Boston, was driven to Rehoboth by the intolerance of his Boston neighbors, and established his "Study Hall," near Lonsdale. He was a very learned man, a recluse and philosopher.

The fourth of these notables was Rev. John Myles, who was driven out of England because he refused to submit to the act of conformity, and founded the first Bap-

tist church in Massachusetts at Swansea. His flock came from Wales, and the old record book of the parish, now in the possession of Elisha Davis of Rehoboth, has its earliest pages written in the Welsh language.

Among the notable men born in Rehoboth have been Benjamin West, LL. D., mathematician and philosopher; Dr. Nathan Smith, professor of Yale, and founder of Dartmouth Medical school; Abraham Blanding, LL. D., eminent lawyer of South Carolina; Aruna S. Abell, founder of the Baltimore Sun; Dr. William Blanding, the naturalist, founder of the natural history collections in Brown University; ex-Gov. John W. Davis, of Rhode Island, Cornelius N. Bliss of New York and Chief Justice Mason of the Massachusetts superior court.

Other notable Attleboro men have been Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, president of Brown University and of Union and Columbia Colleges; Rev. Naphtali Daggett, president of Yale; Rev. E. G. Robinson, D. D., late president of Brown University; Hon. David Daggett, chief justice of Connecticut, and United States Senator.



EDGAR PERRY.



## Address of Welcome

BY EDGAR PERRY, ESQ.

This is a family reunion. Rehoboth welcomes back to the old homestead to-day her daughter cities and towns. We are all ready for company. The parlor blinds are open, the sitting room has been swept and dusted, the spare chamber aired. The choicest fruits of field and orchard have been reserved for your entertainment, and the pantry is filled with as many good things as ever graced an old-fashioned Thanksgiving. We are to have a general handshaking this morning; then the dinner; after that, some first rate speaking, and this evening, when the old folks have turned homeward—well, we have plenty of music and one of the best prompters in Bristol county. I am sure you will be glad you came. But we might have all these, the music, the feasting, the oratory, without a reunion. A true joining of hearts and hands such as we have to-day can only come from a feeling of kinship, consciousness of sympathy and good will, pride in a common history and hope for a united and glorious future.

But, in a broader sense, this is more than a reunion, more than a family or neighborhood gathering. Old Rehoboth, venerable and historic, crowned with the dignity of the centuries, receives at her door the homage of all men who admire the American spirit and the American ideal. Secure in the consciousness of noble descent and worthy deeds, Rehoboth has not troubled herself greatly to advertise her achievements. Like her own housewives, she has been conspicuous by her modesty, her womanly

reserve, her sound common sense. She has left it to her children to rise up as they do to-day all over this broad land and call her blessed.

Rehoboth's history gains to-day in the presence of the high officials of two states, a tardy recognition of its importance. There is a large and eminently respectable body of Massachusetts antiquarians who consider no ground historic which is not visible on a clear day from the gilded dome of the State House ; while their Rhode Island counterparts admit the existence of but one patriotic pioneer, their controversial and enterprising Baptist minister. Some otherwise well informed people near the seat of Massachusetts culture have recently affected not to know where Rehoboth is, and a lower order of intelligence has stumbled at the spelling and the pronunciation of its scriptural name. This celebration will fail of its object if it does not prove that Rehoboth has soil as historic as Lexington, founders as learned and as liberal as Roger Williams, educators as far-seeing as those at Cambridge, soldiers as brave as the men who fell on Bunker Hill, statesmen as patriotic as those who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Lineage and circumstances of birth have much to do with the formation of character, whether of individuals or communities. Rehoboth was born in an epoch-making era. It was a time of great beginnings, of radical departures in thought, of intense convictions. Europe bristled with activity. In Prussia, Frederick the Great was laying deep and strong the foundation of what has since become the German Empire. In Russia, Peter the Great was leading his semi-barbarous people towards civilization, going to Amsterdam himself to learn the art of ship-building. In

France, Louis XIV and the astute Richelieu had made their country the most formidable power in Europe, while in England, the mighty Cromwell was leading the revolt of the people against Royalist oppression and corruption.

From such an atmosphere came the men who crossed the seas and founded Rehoboth. In the ranks of these pioneers four figures stand out in bold relief: William Blackstone, the sage and philosopher; Samuel Newman, the scholar and preacher; Thomas Willett, the soldier and statesman, and John Myles, the reformer and liberal leader. They sought a place to write anew the history of the world. Their motto was,

#### GIVE ME WHITE PAPER.

The sheet you use is black and rough with smears  
Of sweat and grime and fraud and blood and tears ;  
Crossed with the story of men's sins and fears,  
Of battle and of famine all these years.  
When all God's children have forgot their birth  
And drudged and fought and died like beasts of earth ;  
Give me white paper.

It is a curious fact that none of these seekers for better things turned to Rehoboth until they had tried some other settlement. William Blackstone tried Boston; Samuel Newman, Weymouth; Thomas Willett, Plymouth; John Myles, Hingham. Their roseate expectations of what they would find in the new world were not at first realized. They made the inevitable discovery that crossing the ocean did not change human nature; that jealousy, intolerance and self-seeking could live side by side with the severest orthodoxy and the greatest zeal for colonization. They soon turned, however, in renewed hope, to the fair territory that lay untrodden on the West, as beautiful in their eyes as any fabled Eldorado. There their



ideals were to be realized. In its charmed circle all the virtues were to flourish and error was to halt abashed at its boundaries.

In the organization of the new colony, several notable ideas were incorporated. The first was Independence. This handful of men, led by Parson Newman, recognized no temporal power as having authority over them. The second idea was a government of the people and by the people. Their compact read, "We do covenant and bind ourselves, one to another, to subject ourselves to nine persons and to assist them according to our ability and estate, and to give timely notice unto them of any such things as in our conscience may prove dangerous to the plantation, and this combination to continue until we shall subject ourselves jointly to some other government."

But Rehoboth's chief glory is that its founders, with due credit to their Oxford and Cambridge training, originated one institution without which the experiment of a free government on this continent must have proved a failure. It was nothing less than the free public school; the idea of free, universal, compulsory education, maintained by the taxation of all citizens.

The last legislature voted to build a monument on the site of the first free public school. As at present advised, we certainly believe that it should be erected here. There is to be a hearing on the matter before the governor's Council to-morrow, and we understand that one of the wards of the city of Boston, in whose interests no doubt the act was drawn, will appear and bid for the coveted prize. Rehoboth's claim is based on the finding of the learned men who compiled the Digest of the Statutes of Massachusetts, issued no longer ago than 1892. The passage reads:—

“The act of 1647 made the support of public schools compulsory and education universal and free. As this was the first law of the kind ever passed by any community of persons or by any state, Massachusetts may claim the honor of having originated the free public school.”

If the compilers of this Digest were right, as they undoubtedly were, in ignoring Dorchester's claim of 1638 when they set the date of the first free public school at 1647, then the claim of Rehoboth for Dec. 10th, 1643 is good, for the Rehoboth measure went even farther than the act of 1647 and was four years earlier. It provided for the taxation of *all* citizens for the support of the school master whether they had children to educate or not, while under the Act of 1647, taxation for schools could, by vote, be limited to parents and guardians. The Rehoboth vote established a school which met all the essentials of public instruction as we understand it to-day, and doubtless the claim of Dorchester was passed by because the authors of the Digest detected in its plan the lack of some necessary feature. I doubt whether Parson Newman realized the full significance of his discovery, any more than did Columbus. And, yet, I think there must have been a strange glow in his heart, a thrill of prophetic fervor in his voice that chill winter's night, as he stretched out his hands in benediction over the bowed heads of the discoverers of the free public school.

Rehoboth holds as distinguished a relation to the annals of Indian warfare as Plymouth to the inception of the colonies, or Lexington to the Revolutionary struggle. It was the frontier town during King Philip's war. The first blood of a contest which menaced not alone the very life but the liberty of the colonies was shed in its original boundaries, while within its present limits the last trium-

phant strategy of that struggle was consummated. If to stand on the confines of savage territory and defend the hearths and homes that lie behind be patriotism, Myles Bridge is as truly historic ground as Lexington Common.

It is not strange, in view of Rehoboth's progressive spirit and conspicuous services, its promising territory and fine frontage on Narragansett Bay, that it should have been selected in 1706 as the place for holding a Continental Congress. When Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies united to form the state, moreover, Rehoboth became Boston's most formidable rival as the capital and missed the honor by less than one hundred votes in a total of nearly four thousand.

Attleboro, worthy daughter of Rehoboth, has two special claims to distinction which I have no doubt will be ably exploited at their 200th celebration on the 18th and 19th of this month. They need only be mentioned here. One was when Col. Daggett and his command bore arms against the King of England a week before the embattled farmers at Concord fired the shot, heard round the world. The Attleboro company only missed opening the revolutionary struggle, because, in their Assonet Expedition, April 9, 1775, they captured the enemy without a blow. If some Tory had only had spunk enough to fight, the war would have begun then and there.

As another distinction, Attleboro has the honor of anticipating the spirit and almost the words of the Declaration of Independence, two months before that document was signed. They sent this remarkable message to their representative in Congress: "If the Continental Congress shall think best to declare for independence of Great Brit-

ain, we unanimously desire you for us to engage to defend them therein with our lives and our fortunes."

We are here to tell the story of 250 years. I have only outlined a few main features of the picture. It remains for the representatives of the visiting cities and towns to fill in the details; for the orator and other distinguished speakers to give it the light and shade; for the poet to add a dash of color.

It merely devolves upon me now to welcome you in behalf of the anniversary committee, the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society and the old mother town. Your presence in such numbers is all the more appreciated because it has not been easy for you to get here. Rehoboth jealously guards the rare distinction of being one of the few towns in the State where the discordant shriek of the locomotive is never heard. She, at least, gains this assurance by her isolation, that those who visit her are inspired to do so by genuine affection.

She extends her hands in greeting to her mother, Weymouth, and her eight matronly daughters, each "mother of a mighty race, yet lovely in her youthful grace." Swansea is here, bringing with her the breath of the sea; Attleboro and North Attleboro with differences forgotten, sit side by side, twin jewels of the family circle; Seekonk, like a modern Ceres, bears in her hands the wealth of her harvests; while across the imaginary boundary line that divides Rhode Island from the Massachusetts sisters, Cumberland forsakes her spindles and looms, Pawtucket closes her factories and stores, East Providence and Barrington leave their homes and gardens, and a smiling, prosperous quartette, they greet the venerable mother town on her 250th birthday.

We welcome them and you to our homes and our hearts, to our fields rich with harvests, to our woods decked out in the prismatic hues of autumn. No military company turned out to greet you because we do not beleive in keeping up a gilded fiction of war in time of peace. Our courts have not adjourned, because the fair Portias who rule the only kind of court we ever find necessary here always have an especially heavy docket on 250th anniversaries. In our reception committee glisten no official insignia of Worshipful masters, Noble Grands, or Grand Sachems, yet it is but fair to the town to say that we once had a very Independent Order of Red Men here, a thriving Lodge of very free and very acceptable Masons, founded by one Sampson Mason, while as for Odd Fellows, unprejudiced outsiders find even more of them in town than we do.

We trust many of you will be so well pleased with us, despite the lack of some of these modern functions, that you will decide to buy back the farms which your ancestors tilled for so many years and make your homes here. By that we do not necessarily mean that you should give up your regular business and live here all the year around, but register here, vote here, and spend the six pleasantest months in our matchless climate. Why go to the mountains and seashore for country air when we offer every advantage without the annoyance of long journeys in the stifling atmosphere of railway trains? If your response to our invitation is general and you show a worthy pride in the amount of your personal property when talking with our assessors, we can at least assure you a very attractive tax rate.

We regret that we cannot, however, hold out such political inducements as were possible when Rehoboth sent

seven representatives to the general court every year. Now it is one every four years. We should wish to reserve that office to ourselves and make 20 years residence in the town a prerequisite for the honor. You can have everything but that. An option on our choicest corner lots is yours. You can select your own sites on our picturesque hillsides, while plenty of good farms can be had at prices that will lay the foundation for a fortune. We want you; we want your historic names restored to our voting list, and in return we guarantee good schools, good roads, religious harmony, the best of good fellowship, and a welcome that will warm your hearts.

This celebration will be futile indeed, if it does not inspire us, the residents of the cities and towns that have grown up on the fair territory of old Rehoboth, with a lofty determination to realize more perfectly the noble ideals of its patriotic founders. I fear that if those worthies were to return to-day, they might have some pointed suggestions to offer; and yet with the larger knowledge, the wider charity of another world, I cannot but think their judgments would be tempered with mercy. Let the artificial municipal boundaries which man's convenience has invented be swept aside, and when great moral, economic and social questions are to be met, may the Rehoboth household stand together as firm in moral purpose and patriotic devotion as ever their forefathers were. "To our fidelity," in the words of the immortal Burke, "Let us attest the retiring generations; let us attest the advancing generations, between which as a link in the great chain of eternal order we stand."

Ladies and gentlemen, sons and daughters of Old Rehoboth, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you as the presiding officer of this occasion and its toastmaster

a gentleman well-known within and beyond the boundaries of our mother town, and whose birthplace was within the jurisdiction originally ours. I present to you, the Honorable Thomas W. Bicknell, of Barrington and Providence, R. I.





## Recognition of Visiting Towns and Cities, Mainly Daughters of Ancient Rehoboth.

*Address by Hon. Thomas W. Bicknell, who presided over the forenoon exercises and also acted as Toast-Master.*

It is at once an honor and a pleasure to be the medium of address between this venerable mother town, Rehoboth, two and one half centuries old, and her children, grand children, and visiting guests. While formal introduction would cool the ardor of the home greeting, it is quite proper that one "to the manner born" should attempt the word of cordial introduction, and present to the gracious mother, by some fitting thought, her children and guests at this memorable and auspicious meeting.

Two kingdoms and two kings claimed the territory we now occupy, when in 1644, Rev. Samuel Newman and his little company left old Weymouth near the sea, for this frontier of immigration, the Great West of that early day. Britain with Charles the First as its crowned head, held general title, while Massasoit and the tribe of the Wampanoags, of which he was the Chief Sachem, were the owners and occupants of the territory, called by the Indians, Pokanoket, Seekonk and Wannamoisett. Town rights were obtained by purchase and deed from the Great Sachem, and on account of the marvellous room for settlement, Mr. Newman, in reverence for Bible authority called the place "Rehoboth." To the first

purchase of eight miles square was added in 1661, what was known as the Rehoboth North Purchase by deed from Alexander, brother of Philip and son of Massasoit.

Rehoboth, the mother town, has of her great abundance and with generous spirit endowed daughter towns, so that her own possessions, population and wealth, have in large measure gone to these prosperous municipalities. Swansea on the South, held of Rehoboth by police title, was the first to separate from the mother town in 1667. In 1694, Attleboro on the North, also held by police tenure, took leave of the mother town for an independent life. In 1717, "the Westward end of Swansea" was erected into a town, on account of religious concerns, and called Barrington, the first grand child of old Rehoboth. In 1746-7, Attleboro Gore, the home of William Blackstone, on the Blackstone River, parted from Attleboro to enter upon a corporate being as Cumberland. Seekonk, in 1812, for political reasons, divided equally with the mother town her territorial possessions. Pawtucket for economic purposes was set off from Seekonk in 1828, and East Providence became an independent township in 1862, for political, social, economic and religious reasons combined. The latest and youngest of the grand children of our mother is North Attleboro, which set up house-keeping in 1887. Nine towns and cities possess the territory of Old Rehoboth, within the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, three of which may be styled children of the first, and five, children of the second descent. These have increased, but the mother town has decreased. Her pride in her offspring and her interest in their growth and prosperity have made her self-forgetful of her own narrowed limits and resources. She had

rather be the mother of the Gracchi than a desolate Rachel, without hope or progeny.

On the area purchased and settled by Willett, Newman, Myles, Brown and their associates in 1644 and 1661, dwells in 11,000 busy homes, a prosperous population of 50,000 people in as many as fifty cities, towns and hamlets. Education has planted schools of all grades from the Kindergarten to the College, in which every child may receive free school training, preparatory for the University, at the expense of the State. Religion ministers its living grace, instruction and consolations to the people through fifty organized churches and Sunday Schools, with as many ordained ministers and teachers of various faiths.

The appraised wealth of the nine towns is	
estimated at	\$50,000,000
The real wealth is probably	75,000,000
With a per capita wealth of	1,500

Agriculture and the manufacture of cotton and woolen goods, jewelry, and implements and products of wood and iron employ the well protected capital and labor of thousands of people. Steam and electricity have been active agents in developing the industries of the people, but the slumbers of the citizens of the parent town have never been disturbed by either. Goldsmith's "Sweet Auburn" has been her type of character and progress. The rural and suburban life of these municipalities has illustrated in most complete fashion the virtues of the founders.

To the brief stories of these daughter towns through their chosen representatives we will now address ourselves.

## Weymouth, 1635 :

A liberal town in a liberal colony sent a liberal company, of her abundance, to level the wilderness, break the virgin soil, subdue wild beasts and more savage men, and sow good seed beside strange waters. The mother town by the sea comes to visit her once Western frontier and may exclaim as she sees the growth and progress of two and one half centuries, "What hath God wrought" through these brethren of that day of grace and greatness.

RESPONSE BY BRADFORD HAWES, ESQ., OF WEYMOUTH,  
MASS.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

It gives me sincere pleasure to bring to you the congratulations of Weymouth on this the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Rehoboth, and to add what I can to the rejoicing of this pleasant occasion.

I have been introduced to you as the representative of the mother town. I might be inclined myself to regard the relationship between Weymouth and Rehoboth, in view of the comparatively brief difference in their ages, as that of sisters; but I will not as a loyal son of old Weymouth, relinquish for her the honor of giving birth to so comely and vigorous a daughter. I find at the head of my toast, Weymouth, 1635. This was indeed the year of her incorporation under her present name, but as the plantation of Wessagussett her age dates back to within two years of the time when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, so we see that when she became the mother of Rehoboth she was not so very young as would appear but was already verging on toward a matronly age. The first settlers who came to Weymouth were a

colony of adventurers consisting of sixty men, gathered from the streets of London and sent out by Thomas Weston in 1622.

The life of hardship and privation to which they were unaccustomed told heavily upon them, and many of them died during the first winter; the remainder became discouraged and returned the following summer to England; but the tide was setting westward and in 1693 Robert Gorges came with a company of settlers, many of them being men with families, but their experience was much like that of the first comers and at the end of the year saw many of them scattered or returned to England.

No element of stability actuated the first comers to Weymouth, unlike the Pilgrims at the south or the Puritans at the north of them; no great religious or political principle bound them together and they left no permanent impression on the life of the new colony.

Weymouth was never proud of her first settlers, but would not at this late day judge them harshly; they probably compared favorably with the generality of frontier settlers; at any rate they were pioneers for a better element, which, from this time, continued to build up slowly but surely the foundations of the young colony, until the coming of the Rev. Joseph Hull in 1635 with a company of twenty-one families, or about one hundred souls, (the largest number recorded as ever coming to the town in any one year), gave an element of permanence and prosperity to the new town now incorporated which it had not before attained.

When in 1644 Rev. Samuel Newman left Weymouth with his company the population of the town had in-

creased to nine hundred souls. He had been called some four years before to heal a breach which had arisen in the church, and appears to have been at the time successful; but whether some new difficulty, born of the diverse religious elements of the time had arisen, or whatever the cause, the imperfect records existing do not enable us to determine, but certain it is that he left Weymouth with forty families or about two hundred persons. We may pause here to enquire, in what consisted the liberality of the mother town? Not in worldly goods, of these she had but little to bestow upon her daughter. Nor yet in, her ideas, although these, owing to the more varied elements of her population, were not perhaps run so much in one groove as were those of her neighbors to the north or south. I deem that her liberality consisted rather in the giving of her men and of her women, even to one-fourth of all she had to the founding of the infant colony; and certainly on this line Weymouth has never ceased to be liberal; with the ever widening and advancing line of our frontier, her sons and daughters have been freely given to help in peopling the land, until in every state, and I had almost said in every city and town the men from Weymouth or their descendants are to be found.

“This liberal company then from a liberal town came to level the wilderness, subdue wild beasts and more savage men, to break the soil and to sow good seed beside strange waters.”

As I came down this pleasant October morning I tried to picture to myself the wilderness through which they toiled, to cover the hills and the plains over which they passed with the primeval forest where danger lurked at every step.

The hills and the plains are there to-day, but where then was a forest wilderness, to-day stand busy cities and thriving towns, with the intervening landscape covered with fruitful farms, the abodes of peace and plenty, with the church and the school-house, the twin factors in our Nation's progress, within reach of all whether rich or poor.

They did well their work. That they sowed good seed the harvest which you to-day reap abundantly testifies; 'these thriving towns, these happy homes, these fertile fields, the industrial, political and religious institutions which bring to us daily benefits are not the fruits of vice or sloth or carelessness.

But let us not in our rejoicing forget the great lesson of the hour. It is not ours alone to gather the fruits of their toils, but ours also to transmit unimpaired and ever increasing to our posterity the blessings which their wisdom and piety, their valor and industry gave to us.

"The mother town may well exclaim as she visits her once western frontier and sees the progress of two and one-half centuries, wha thath God wrought?" but if it be put as a question who shall answer it?

The results of their toils and suffering we cannot see in their fullness, they are world-wide, and shall reach through time.

If we are faithful to our trust, these evidences which we see to-day may well be but tokens of the greater harvest which the coming years hold in store.

You cannot answer, I cannot answer, only He who knows the end from the beginning, and to Whom the future is an open book,—only He can tell what He hath



wrought "through the men of that day of grace and greatness."

Swansea, 1667 :

The home of Rev. John Myles and the first Baptist Church in Massachusetts. Her founders, through persecution, illustrated and advanced the great principles of religious freedom and toleration.

RESPONSE BY EDWARD M. THURSTON, ESQ., OF SWANSEA,  
MASS.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

It is a pleasure to respond for the town of Swansea.

Prose and Poem have vied with each other throughout this Commonwealth in describing the sterling qualities, profound convictions and strong courage of the defenders of the principles held by the Rev. John Myles, of Swansea, Wales, as carried out and embodied in a church covenant in New Swansea, New England. There was not "room" enough in the great township of Rehoboth for the Newman Congregational church, and the seven men who held to what was then called heretical doctrine, believed by Rev. John Myles and the six layman, who, when driven from your territory, were incorporated into a church. They located on a strip of land now known as New Meadow Neck, but so far from the church in Seekonk, that although within the borders of the township of Rehoboth at that time, distance would give the old church peace. But soon men of equal courage united with the bold pastor, and were given a grant of land by the Plymouth colony for a new town which they named Swansea, for the Swansea in Wales, from which the pastor and some of the settlers had been driven. We can





ELISHA DAVIS.



find no reason in history why this beautiful name of Swansea should have been so corrupted by misspelling as it has been, thus changing the pronunciation. The correct way to spell the word is S-w-a-n-s-e-a, as it is spelled in Wales, from which our town was named.

I am of the opinion that Rehoboth feared the tenets held by Myles, and his followers had tainted the ground on which they located, for they were willing to allow that part of Rehoboth to be taken by the new town of Swansea. And so we are here to-day as a daughter of Rehoboth. It now seems harsh and almost cruel that those men should have been driven from your borders, and not only driven away but fined £5 each and forbidden to worship for a month. They must have had the grace of God in their hearts to bear such sentences, but they did bear them, and when requested to move on, move on they did. But we can now thank you and our Heavenly Father that that which was intended for their correction and to their hurt was overruled by Him whose they were, to the good of all succeeding generations. Rev. John Myles had for years battled against the civil government controlling the church, and with that courage of which martyrs are made, he came to this, our New England, and true to his convictions he continued the battle, at times against him, but in the end he conquered, and the First Baptist church of Swansea is recognized in history as the first church in the Commonwealth to make a covenant that should speak clearly and plainly that the church was for the spiritual and heavenly work, and the town for the civil and earthly part. And on our soil we received what you rejected, and there was planted the "handful of corn in the earth on the top of the mountain; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon."

This first church has passed through many trials and dark days, but for nearly two hundred and fifty years the gospel of peace and good-will to men has been sounding in no uncertain strain from its midst. Religious toleration obtained a strong foothold and Swansea soon became to be regarded as the safe place for refuge for all those who would worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. And while this denomination, or sect, as it was then called, continued to suffer persecution they continued to increase in numbers, and with the growing interest in and prosperity of Roger Williams beyond the Seekonk, they soon found that rest and peace which they desired, for, by 1766, Pastor Newman having died, this same persecuted, fined, banished Rev. John Myles was called to preach in the same church by which he had been exiled. So "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform."

What more can I say? The town of Swansea is now content. Her churches are as a light on a hill; they give no uncertain sound. And to this day, so strongly have the doctrines of the Baptist denomination been imbibed by its inhabitants that we are still a Baptist town, and with but one or two exceptions, no other denomination has gained a foothold. We believe that we have entered into the reward of those who labored, were persecuted and banished. And now in our peaceful homes, surrounded by well-managed and productive farms with a deep interest in our common schools, and with a constant improvement of our highways, we come to you on this, your two hundred and fiftieth anniversary, and thank you that you gave us such men for our first settlers; and we would say, that what you considered a punishment for heretical doctrine, has proved a rich reward to those who

have followed in the belief, and practised the virtues of those whom you banished from your territory. We congratulate you on your prosperity; and our desire is, that we may in all our councils, have that charity for each other which has been ours for the generations past; and the same kindly spirit, rejoicing in each other's prosperity and sorrowing in each other's adversity; and that we may leave to those now pressing to the front, as rich an heritage in a church believing in the fullest toleration, but firm on the great truths of the word of God.

Allow me in closing, to quote from a memorable address, given by the chairman of the day, before the Bostonian Society, Boston, in 1882:

“We have good reason to hold John Myles in memory as the founder of the first free Baptist church in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; as the co-founder with Capt. Thomas Willett of a town after the Baptist order, the first and the only one in the Commonwealth of the early founding, and of the declaration on Massachusetts' soil, and the practical application of the principles of a true Christian society. In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”

Barrington, 1717:

Child of Swansea, and grand-child of Rehoboth,—guardian of the graves of the Wampanoags, and heir to the clam-banks and fisheries of Massasoit. With John Myles as her pastor and teacher, Myles Standish as a proprietor, Samuel Willett and John Brown as residents in her own Wannamoisett, and Weymouth as her great-grandmother, what better lineage and possession could she desire?

RESPONSE BY FRED. P. CHURCH, ESQ., OF BARRINGTON,  
R. I.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

Barrington the grandchild, the beautiful maiden of 177 years, sends her cordial, loving greeting to her hale and hearty grandmother, on this her two hundred and fiftieth birthday.

A child of Swansea, born when she was a blushing maid of fifty, and therefore a grandchild of dear old Rehoboth, who at her birth was still a comely matron of seventy-three, and a great-grandchild of historic old Weymouth.

From 1745 to 1770 Barrington dwelt with her twin sister Warren, but at that date set up for herself an independent household on the other side of the river, "guardian of the dust" of that strong and faithful ally of the Pilgrims, the Wampanoags, whose friendship won by fair dealing and firmness, proved a very wall of defence to that weak, struggling band for over fifty years.

Heir of the sources of the material wealth of old Massasoit, the fisheries and clambanks, which banks are still a perennial source of dividends, whose continuity no hard times can break, and no panics disturb, and the enjoyment of which is not exclusive, for we have no monopoly but share the dividends willingly and freely with our neighbors, as many a family church and town reunion abundantly proves.

Linked to the Mayflower, the rich and beloved old Plymouth, by that brave, fearless, indomitable soldier, Capt. Myles Standish, whose day-dreams and night visions (if we are to believe tradition), were of landed

estates, and a noble title over the sea, and who in part at least realized those dreams when he became a proprietor in our fertile meadows near Nayatt.

Kept in constant touch with that noble band of self-denying, self-sacrificing men and women, for the principle of freedom in civil and religious affairs, by such men as Capt. Thomas Willet and Mr. John Brown. The former a soldier of no mean parts, a man of great executive ability, a born diplomat, the first and twice mayor of New York city, he filled the varied positions to which he was called with talent, energy and intelligence. The latter not so famous outside the town and colony, was identified with all the higher interests of our people. A large-hearted generous Christian man, ready to assume the larger end of every burden, he exemplified the value of true fellowship and active faith, and in serenity and much comfort fell asleep in the Lord, and was buried in Wanamissett. John Myles, pastor, teacher, and citizen, broad minded, far seeing, far in advance of his day and generation in the scope and liberality of his faith, warm hearted, tolerant of all, loving wisdom and knowledge for their intrinsic worth, he gave of his rich treasures of wisdom and experience freely and constantly to elevate and ennoble his people. The founder of the Baptist church in Plymouth and the Bay colonies, he led in all that uplifts and purifies the moral and spiritual life of his flock.

Fondly do we guard our possessions and rich legacies of character, treasures that enrich and never lose their value. Proud are we of our family connections. Well have we profited by the legacies of the past.

Barrington has given men of affairs to the state and nation of the character and quality I leave you to judge



and point you to the honored Chairman as one of her later ones. One other I would refer to here, well known to many in this audience to-day. A man whose large warm heart beat with loving sympathy for the tried and erring, whose clear mature mind and strong common sense united with a liberal spirit and a sublime faith reminded us of the strong men of the past. I speak of the Hon. Lewis B. Smith, "who being dead, yet speaketh" to us to-day.

Barrington has not acquired as much of material wealth as some of her children or grandchildren of old Rehoboth, but she has kept the spirit of her ancestors, as her wide awake, intelligent public spirit indicates and has ever sought to emulate their sterling qualities of honesty and sobriety and high moral character that has for its basis virtue and true godliness. What better lineage and possessions *could* Barrington desire? "Truly the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places and we have a goodly heritage."

Barrington brings the glory of her lineage and the honor of her possessions and achievements and lays them at the feet of her grandmother, with her sincere and hearty congratulations on this her anniversary day.

### Attleboro, 1694:

Rehoboth celebrated her fiftieth birthday by giving her dowry and blessing to an enterprising daughter named Attleboro who set up housekeeping for herself at birth, and soon celebrates her two hundredth anniversary. Her two children, Cumberland and North Attleboro, rise up and call her blessed, while our ancient mother Rehoboth says of her, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all."



## North Attleboro, 1887

Westward the star of Empire and Northward the star of Enterprise takes its way from Rehoboth to the pushing, thriving, driving new municipality of North Attleboro. While she may not remember Joseph and the flocks of Kedar, she has respect for the Gold of Ophir, and of one of her diamond jewelled maidens it might be said, "Even Solomon in all his Glory was not arrayed like one of these." She is the crown jewel and jeweller of her granddam Rehoboth. May she always wear a glittering diadem.

RESPONSE BY REV. JOHN WHITEHILL, OF OLDTOWN,  
MASS.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

North Attleboro regards herself as a sister, rather than a daughter of Attleboro. She is the youngest daughter of Rehoboth, and as the same time one of the oldest.

At the youngest she is but seven years of age, and her body consists of a slice taken from so much of old Rehoboth North Purchase as was left after Cumberland had been set off to Rhode Island in 1746-7. For some years previous to the incorporation of North Attleboro as a separate municipality there were two large villages called North Attleboro and East Attleboro (or sometimes Attleboro simply), about four miles apart. Each village had its own churches, its own high school, as well as common schools, its own bank, its own jewelry shops and other manufactories, etc. The two places were like the Siamese twins, each complete in itself, each distinct from the other, yet both having the same life blood and the

same interests. There were some people, however, who said that the ligament holding them together ought to be cut. It was claimed that they were making faces at each other; or if not, they would soon be doing it, for, being rivals, it was but natural that they should. Efforts were made in town meeting to commit the town by legal vote in favor of division, but without success.

Finally the legislature was petitioned, and on the fourteenth of June, 1887, a permissive bill was approved. This was an "Act to incorporate the Town of North Attleborough." It was to be null and void, unless ratified within a certain time by a majority of the voters present and voting in the several precincts on the same day. The voting took place July 30, 1887, and division was carried by a majority of 23 in a total vote of 1307. Of the 665 votes in favor of division nearly two thirds were cast by those living outside of the proposed new town of North Attleboro. North Attleboro is no secessionist. She went out to be by herself, because she was politely but deliberately voted out by those who were not resident on her soil.

We are a child of seven years only, but we have a vigorous life derived from the sturdy yeomen of old Rehoboth. We number about seven thousand people (as many as were in the whole of the town twenty-four years ago), and our property valuation is about four millions.

It will give you some faint idea of our prosperity and our great expectations to be told that New Boston lies within our territory, in the northeastern section of our town. You know what a vast difference there is in size and growth and enterprise between New York on this continent and old York in the mother country.

There is as great a difference between the Boston which vauntingly styles herself "the hub of the universe" and the New Boston which lies within the limits of our town. Not a little has been said recently in the newspapers about schemes of annexation, which, if carried into effect, are to result in the "Greater Boston" as it is called. Wait till our New Boston swallows up the old city at the head of Massachusetts Bay, and then you will see a greater Boston indeed.

We have town electric lights, town water, a town fire department and a town library. There is in process of erection a fine library building—the Richards Memorial,—the gift of a public spirited and generous family of the town.

Two steam railroad systems traverse our territory—the New York and New England and the New York, New Haven and Hartford—furnishing direct communication with Providence and Boston. In addition to these we have two lines of electric street car rails, connecting us with Plainville, Attleboro and Pawtucket. These rails are a great blessing to our children who get much gymnastic practice thereon, trying to see how far they can walk on them without stepping off.

We have in our town four post-offices, making considerable work for a number of local politicians every time there is a change in national administration. Our schools number thirty-one, employing forty-two teachers. For school houses we have seven large two-story buildings, besides five smaller buildings for the accommodation of single schools. Our school system is so good that many of our teachers are sought and lured away to other towns and cities where higher salaries are paid.

Our people are well accommodated with churches, each of which is a centre of blessing to its own particular field, and all of which are as one, when anything is projected for the general good, as, for instance, when the cause of temperance or of charity calls for united action.

We rejoice in all the prosperity of our sister town, bordering us on the southeast, and we do not intend to be led into any comparisons with her. You know what is said of comparisons. But when you hear of West Attleboro and Attleboro Falls and Attleboro Agricultural Association and the Attleboro Fair and Attleboro this and Attleboro that, bear in mind that these places and things are in North Attleboro. Even the two principal streams—the Seven Mile river and the Ten Mile river—gather their blessings in North Attleboro, before advancing further in their course pour them into the lap of our sister town with the shorter name.

Our old mother Rehoboth here may be pardoned, if she feels a special fondness for North Attleboro. It was from North Attleboro that the former pastor of your village church came—the pastor who served you with such faithfulness and acceptance for a period of fourteen years, and who took the lead in the formation of your Antiquarian Society and guided the movement which culminated in the erection of your beautiful Goff Memorial Building. Rev. George W. Tilton was the first pastor of the Central Congregational Church in North Attleboro, and came to you directly from that church when he had wooed and won the North Attleboro lady whom you knew here as his lovely and accomplished wife.

I said that North Attleboro was not only the youngest but also one of the oldest of the daughters of old mother

Rehoboth. When you speak of the Massachusetts part of the old North Purchase, it is North Attleboro chiefly that you must have in mind. North Attleboro is the old, original, genuine successor of that North Purchase. "All others are base imitations."

It was in North Attleboro that the first house was built by a Rehoboth settler—the house of John Woodcock, which was also the first tavern, and was used as a garrison in King Philip's war. It was in North Attleboro that the first mill was built—the saw and grist mill of Joseph and Nathaniel Daggett. The first establishment for the manufacture of jewelry was in North Attleboro, one hundred and fourteen years ago, and the second too, for that matter. In North Attleboro stood the first meeting-house built by the immigrants from Rehoboth. In North Attleboro was, and is, the old powder house, where the settlers kept their ammunition, one hundred and twenty-five years ago, and close by, in the same town, is the training ground used by their military forces. We still keep alive in North Attleboro the old Indian names in our Wamsutta hotel and opera house and our Anawan block. Coming down to more recent times, it was in North Attleboro that the first local newspaper was started.

But I have gone into particulars enough. We are not boasting. We are simply developing and interpreting by this statement of facts the true but glowing eulogy pronounced by you, Mr. Toastmaster, upon our honored town. Our only purpose is to show that North Attleboro, although the youngest of Rehoboth's municipal daughters, is neither a foundling nor an upstart. No other daughter has received more of her life from good, old mother Rehoboth than she, and none is bound to the mother by ten-

derer recollections and stronger and more numerous ties. Even if she were disposed to ignore her origin (which she is not), she could not do it, while so many interesting events in history connect her directly with the distant past and so many monuments on her soil point to the ancient town from which she came. All these things must pass from sight and from memory before it can be said of her that "she knew not Joseph." As for "the flocks of Kedar," how can she forget them so long as her inhabitants continue to be assessed for more than half a thousand cows and twenty-eight sheep?

Although her most conspicuous industry is the manufacture of jewelry, yet many of her ten thousand acres are under cultivation, and her fruits and field products speak for themselves in her annual fairs. She is indeed "the crown jewel and jeweler of her mother Rehoboth," and can deck herself any day in a glory rivaling that of Solomon; yet she is no lover of vain display, as any one can see who walks her streets and looks upon the neat and tasteful homes of her people. 'She aims to produce artistic work which shall be "a thing of beauty," if not "a joy forever."' But even this work upon which so much ingenuity and skill are expended is regarded as only a means to an end. Personal adornment is not the grand aim of Attleboro life. While seeking to produce ornaments of gold and silver and pearl which shall be unsurpassed in elegance of design and in finish of workmanship, her representative men and women desire, as the town's greatest glory, a population sober, industrious, thrifty, self-respecting, public spirited, reverencing God and seeking the good of their fellow men—a population who shall be the worthy descendants of their Pilgrim ancestors—the pioneers of old Rehoboth.



## Seekonk, 1812:

Push, piety, and patriotism; prime principles of the Pilgrim settlers of Rehoboth;—Seekonk, a loyal daughter of Rehoboth has illustrated the virtues of the Mother-town in all her history.

RESPONSE BY JOSEPH BROWN, ESQ., OF SEEKONK, MASS.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

It is asserted in the sentiment given me to discuss, that the Pilgrim settlers of ancient Rehoboth were men of push, piety and patriotism, and that their descendants have exhibited the virtues of their ancestors.

The spirit of Push that moves to action, is ever the same in whatever channel it acts. But action is always evolved by circumstances; as circumstances differ, action differs. Push is only known in action.

What caused or led the settlers of Ancient Rehoboth to be men of push? What were the circumstances that led them to action? What was the condition of Rehoboth two hundred and fifty-one years ago? Generally a wilderness covered with a dense forest, not a road constructed, not a bridge built, a lot fenced, or a house erected. If they were to make this their home, what must be done? In order to construct roads, bridges, fences, houses, and subdue the forest, together with the cultivation of their crops, what toil, patience, endurance, and perseverance were necessary? But those settlers were equal to the situation. Their great need and the circumstances in which they were placed, nerved them to action, and almost superhuman efforts. Thus, surrounding circumstances moved their spirit of push to action, and they stand before the world notably as men of push.



Patriotism is love of one's own country, a personal quality of character always respected in all ages.

The first settlers of Ancient Rehoboth must have been men of faith and courage, or they would not have left the land of their fathers, the home of their childhood, and severed the thousand associations and ties, binding them to their English homes, and embark on a perilous voyage across the wide ocean, to make a home in a wilderness in a far distant land. And for what? Not for gain like the adventurers to California when gold was discovered, but, for conscience sake. They were a liberty loving people. They would rather suffer exile, and if need be, death, rather than an invasion of their natural and inherent rights.

But they were soon called to meet with more serious difficulties than I have named. They had scarcely cleared their fields, and provided things comfortable, before the Indian war commenced.

Its commencement and close was within the limits of Ancient Rehoboth. It commenced by an attack of the Indians on Wannamoiset, now Swansea, and closed by the capture of Annawan in the vicinity where we are now assembled.

Rehoboth probably suffered more in this war than any other town in Plymouth Colony, because of its proximity to Mt. Hope, the residence of Philip. Rehoboth gave both men and money for this war, and her soil was moistened with the blood of her citizens who fell in conflict with the savage foe. The most bloody and disastrous battle of the war was fought within the limits of Ancient Rehoboth. Sixty-three white men and twenty Cape In-

dians arrived at Rehoboth, now East Providence, when they were joined by some of our citizens, and all went in search of the Indians who were known to be in this vicinity.

Usually the shrill tones of the bugle, the clang of the cymbal, and the deep roll of the drum, nerve the soldiers for the conflict, but not so here. They marched forward silently to the field of carnage and death, but with that determined step, that told the spirit of that heroic band.

They came upon the foe a little above Pawtucket, attacked and pursued them until they were drawn "into an ambuscade, and surrounded by more than five times their number."

Capt. Pierce formed his men in a circle, so as to present a front in every direction. "There was no retreat, it was victory or death." No quarter was asked, no quarter given. The battle raged for nearly three hours, and these brave men fell one by one at their posts till nearly all lay dead or wounded on the bloody field. No monument marks the spot where these brave men fell, but the record of their sacrifice and action is placed on historic shelves, where future generations may read and know somewhat of the courage and patriotism of the first settlers of this country.

History has handed down through the ages the exploits of ancient warriors, records few instances where more courage, determination and patriotism were displayed, than by Pierce and his brave men on Rehoboth's plains.

The Indians then attacked western Rehoboth, now East Providence, drove the inhabitants into the garrison house and burned their dwellings.

When we pass over a century of time, we find the patriotic spirit developed in the Indian war again manifested at the commencement of the trouble with Great Britain.

In 1773 the Town's Corresponding Committee sent a letter to Rehoboth's Representative for him to join in every constitutional measure to remove the unjust burdens laid upon us.

On July 25, 1774, voted they would not purchase any goods imported from Great Britain after August 31st, unless the "Boston Port Bill" was repealed, and the government was restored to its former privileges. Again on May 26, 1775, voted to raise two companies to be ready at any alarm.

The day the news of the battle of Bunker Hill came, Rehoboth troops marched for Boston. The patriotic spirit of this people was shown by the number of men sent into the field, and the liberal appropriations made for their support. Bliss in his history gives the names of one hundred and forty-five men who enlisted into the Continental army from Rehoboth. The war lasted seven years and the calls for men came often, and often for large numbers. I have time to speak of only two of these calls.

On August 18, 1778, there was a requisition on Col. Thomas Carpenter's regiment for one hundred and fifty men to join Gen. Sullivan on Rhode Island. This was only eleven days before the battle.

The men went, and were the first engaged in that conflict, I hold in my hand a call for men from Rehoboth. It is an original paper which has never been published. On examining some ancient papers in my possession a few years since, I found this and many other papers pertaining to the Revolutionary war. It reads as follows:

Rehoboth, August 11, 1779.

Sir:—I have received orders this day from Col. Thomas Carpenter for the purpose of raising two hundred and twenty-eight men out of our Regiment, to march as soon as possible, and to be under the command of the Continental General, to serve four weeks from the time of their arriving in camp, and likewise three Captains and six Lieutenants, to command them, with one Field officer from the Regiment. You are therefore required to raise thirty-three men, and you are desired to meet at Mr. Jeremiah Wheeler's to-morrow, at two o'clock in the afternoon, to consult further about this matter.

Hereof fail not as you regard the welfare of these states, and make due return of the men raised, as soon as made to the Col. of the Regiment or myself.

NATHANIEL CARPENTER, *Major*.

CAPT. JOHN PERRY.

Rehoboth not only sent men but money for their support. On May 5, 1779, voted to appropriate £1,200. On May 19, 1779, £3,000. On October 23, 1780, £26,400. Bliss in his history says the whole amount raised by Rehoboth in 1780, was £50,527, 4 shillings. Probably these large appropriations were made on account of the depreciation of the currency, which was a formidable difficulty they had to encounter.

The people of Rehoboth in common with those of the Colonies, though comparatively few in number, and lacking materially the "sinews of war," when they learned that they could not obtain any redress from the burdens imposed on them, boldly bid defiance to the British lion, trusting themselves and their cause to the Great Arbiter of nations, believing that the race is not always to the swift, or the battle to the strong.

The patriotic spirit of 1675 and 1775 still remains. When news came of the firing upon Ft. Sumter and the defeat of the Union army at Bull Run, the whole North was electrified,—thousands enlisted and rushed to arms; determined to sustain the honor of the old flag.

What caused this great outburst of patriotism? It was the spirit of this people moved to action by the events I have named. We are still the same patriotic people and any attack on our government either from without or within, will stir up this patriotic spirit to action. In conclusion I would say, that though Ancient Rehoboth had not the fertile soil of many of the rich valleys and prairies of the West, the mild climate of Southern California, or the remarkable scenery of the Yosemite Valley, this can be said of her, there is no place in this broad Union, of the same population, that has produced more high-minded, stalwart, brave, industrious, patriotic men, or more noble, virtuous women, than Ancient Rehoboth, which is the noblest fruitage of which any place or nation can boast.

Pawtucket, 1828:

Town building was the chief work of the men of the first generations. Later came state-craft and as a result of both, later still came the spindle, the loom and the busy

factory. Newman spun his concordance near the same spot in old Rehoboth where Samuel Slater spun the first yard of American cloth. Both "wrought as in the great Taskmaster's eye."

Response by Hon. Henry E. Tiepke, Pawtucket.

### Cumberland, 1746:

Around Rehoboth as a centre and Samuel Newman its intellectual and spiritual light gathered other great men as representatives of freedom of thought, opinion and action of the elder day. Among them was William Blackstone who fled England's Lords-Bishops and Boston's "Lord's brethren" for the quiet retreat of Study Hill in Rehoboth, now the soil of Cumberland, a town worthily one of the oldest grand-daughters of Rehoboth.

Hon. Ellis L. Blake was expected to respond for Cumberland, but was not present.

### East Providence, 1862:

A town of varied and successful fortunes: once Rehoboth, then Seekonk, now East Providence; a part of Plymouth County, Bristol County, Providence County; in the States of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Custodian of the ancient church site, the "Ring" of the town, Philips Chair, an original copy of Newman's Concordance, the old Churchyard of the Weymouth worthies, and the graves of Capt. Willet and John Brown. "In the resurrection whose child shall she be?"

RESPONSE BY HON. GEORGE N. BLISS, EAST PROVIDENCE,  
R. I.

In the resurrection, the first settlers of Rehoboth with a goodly number of their descendants will all be found at

the ancient burial ground near the Congregational Church within the "ring of the town" in East Providence and in Little Neck Burial Ground at Riverside. Capt. Thomas Willett, the first mayor of the City of New York, has been sleeping more than two hundred years. It should not be forgotten that Roger Williams in 1636 built a house and planted crops near the mouth of Ten Mile River in East Providence intending to make his home there, but the Governor of Massachusetts wrote him a letter, claiming jurisdiction and advising Roger Williams to go across the river, which he did, thereby losing a crop that year, as it was too late in the season to plant again at his new location in Providence.

The dispute as to the boundary line was not ended until March 1, 1862, when East Providence became a part of Rhode Island, at which time the population was twelve hundred and fifty and the valuation of property was \$1,354,935. The last thirty-two years have given us a rapid growth; the population by the census in 1890 was 8,422 and is now estimated at more than 10,000, and the assessors of taxes for 1894 give as the valuation of taxable property the sum of \$9,018,431. When under Massachusetts rule two dilapidated toll bridges gave the only connection with Providence; these have been replaced by new free bridges and one of these (the Red Bridge) is is now to be rebuilt to give passage to electric street cars; school houses costing \$125,000 have been erected; a new Town Hall, containing a fire proof office for the Town Clerk's records has been constructed; iron pipes have been laid conveying water to all parts of the Town, and the electric street rail cars convey the citizens swiftly and cheaply along the highways.

East Providence has about eight miles of water front







JEREMIAH W. HORTON.

upon the Seekonk and Providence rivers, with steam railroads running the entire distance adjoining or near the water, and there is every reason to expect that the land occupied by the first settlers of Rehoboth will soon be the centre of a thickly settled people.

### Newport :

The sons and daughters of Rehoboth have not only founded towns and cities of their own but have gone forth to assist in building and governing towns, cities and states to the ends of the earth. The Mother-town is proud of their labors and honors, and especially congratulates the ancient municipality of Newport, in the State of Rhode Island, that a successor to John Coddington was found in one of her youngest and most worthy representatives and children.

RESPONSE BY HON. JEREMIAH W. HORTON, NEWPORT,  
R. I.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

While I do not purpose to make a formal speech, I am very grateful for an opportunity to thank my friends for the kind invitation which permits me to join with you in celebrating the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of our native Town. I am pleased to meet so many of the friends of my youth, and I have heartily enjoyed the eloquent words that have been spoken by the distinguished gentlemen who have preceded me. I am also glad of the opportunity I have to speak in behalf of my adopted home. No one has greater reason to be proud of their home or to speak well of it than I have to be proud of Newport and to speak in praise of the "Beautiful City by the sea." In the year

1638 Governor Coddington with seventeen others purchased Aquidneck, (afterward named Rhode Island), of the Indians and begun a settlement in the northern part of the island, now known as Newtown. The following year, 1639, they went south and settled Newport, therefore Rehoboth is five years younger than Newport. Previous to the Revolutionary war, Newport was the most prosperous and thrifty town in the Colonies. It was then styled the "Emporium of fashion, refinement and taste." Many of the houses were models of architectural beauty, and not a few of its inhabitants were wealthy, cultured and refined. The British took possession of the town in the year 1776 and for three years it was under martial law. The eight thousand British soldiers literally sacked the town. Not less than five hundred houses were burned, shade and fruit trees were cut down, all the churches except two were used for riding schools and stables. All the bells except one, the gift of Queen Anne, were taken down and sent to New York, the State House was used for a hospital, all the wells were filled up just before the British evacuated the town. When the British took possession of the town it had a population of twelve thousand. Three years later when they evacuated it there were but four thousand. The inhabitants were then so poor they had to be helped by the neighboring towns, and the State sent one hundred and sixty cords of wood worth \$20.00 per cord, and \$1,000 to be distributed to the poor. Newport has many places of historic interest, and was the birthplace and home of many distinguished men; and among them were such men as Rev. Wm. Ellery Channing, a statue of whom was last year placed upon Touro Park near the Old Stone Mill, the history of which is so shrouded in mystery. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry,

the hero of Lake Erie; his statue stands on Washington Park and was the work of Turner, one of Newport's sons. Commodore Matthew C. Perry who negotiated the treaty with China and Japan and opened their ports to the commerce of the world; his statue stands on Touro Park near Bellevue Avenue; and such artists as King, Malbone, Stuart, Stagg and Richards. On Clarke Street may be seen the Vernon House where Gen. Washington stayed during his first visit to Newport. He was the guest of Count Rochambeau. Upon his arrival in the town the French soldiers formed a line which extended from the wharf where he landed to the Count's headquarters. The following evening there was a parade and the town was illuminated. The Town Council caused candles to be distributed to those who were too poor to buy them so that every window might be lighted. Thirty boys marched at the head of the procession with candle torches. A little anecdote is related of Washington at this time. A little boy in the crowd who had heard much about Gen. Washington was very anxious to see him so his father took him in his arms and carried him to an open window near to which Gen. Washington was standing and pointed him out to the boy. The child looked amazed and said "Why papa, Gen. Washington is a man." The old hero was near enough to hear what the boy said, and turned and put his hand on the boy's head and said, "Yes my lad and nothing but a man."

From that day to this, Newport has been honored by many distinguished visitors. Last year, as Mayor of the city, it was my pleasant duty to be the first to welcome Capt. Anderson with his Viking Ship to America. We were also honored with a visit from Admiral Kaznakoff, with his Russian fleet. The Rajah of Rajahn, King of

Kapurthala, India, also made us a visit. I am here reminded of a little incident which occurred while the King was at Chicago. Governor Brown met the Rajah at some reception, and while talking with him asked him how he liked Rhode Island. He hesitated for a moment and then said, "I have travelled so much and seen so many places that I don't seem to remember Rhode Island." "But," said the Governor, "don't you remember Newport?" "Oh, yes," he said, "I remember Newport, Newport is a beautiful place, I had a delightful time there." So Mr. Chairman you see that while one may forget the State, he will remember Newport.

The vein in which I am speaking reminds me of a story of the Yankee who visited Europe and was there entertained by some English friends. They took him through the halls of Parliament, and when asked what he thought of them said, "Oh, they don't compare with the halls of Legislation in Washington. America is far ahead." They took him to France, and while he acknowledged that some things were beautiful, he said, "America is ahead." They then took him to Rome and visited St. Peters. "This," he said, "is a fine chapel, but we have some cathedrals in my country, America is ahead." His friends were getting a little tired of it, and knowing his weakness they gave him all he wanted to drink, and he got sleepy, so they took him down into the catacombs and laid him down on the cold marble floor, and placing a lighted candle at his head left him to sleep off his stupor. When they thought it was time for him to awake they went back and stood a little way off to see what he would do. Soon he sat up and rubbing his eyes looked around at the skulls and cross-bones that were piled about him. He then seized the

lighted candle, jumped to his feet, and waving the candle above his head exclaimed, "It's the Resurrection morning, and I am the first man up. America is ahead."

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, again I thank you for this cordial greeting, and I sincerely hope that blessings like those which have been so bountifully bestowed upon this Town for two hundred and fifty years may be continued to it for centuries to come.



## Historical Address

BY HON. EDWIN L. BARNEY.

*Men and Women of Rehoboth:*

The flight of years, the round of time, has brought to this old town the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its settlement. The third century of its existence is passing into history. A review of the decades that have gone by reveals the story of a town—Rehoboth has not been incorporated into the cities that have sprung up around her. The farm and homestead still remain. Ancient landmarks are not obliterated. The peaceful hills and valleys have not been converted into the avenues of trade; the fields have not been given over to the factory and the store. The restless, teeming tide of commerce has made no confusing labyrinth of the ways and lanes of this quiet New England town—a town with ambition—a town with influence and blessed with the strength of sturdy men and women. It was not decreed that traffic should rule here. It was not destined that the plan by which this place was created should be thwarted.

The advanced ideas of its founders, their devoted purpose to provide a home-loving community, with a just and impartial government gives its story a never-ending interest. It is not alone the dignity of years that gives significance to this occasion. A great lapse of time would have no particular charm, if that were only for us to contemplate. It is the consideration of what has been done that claims our attention. We are to profit by the contrast between our condition and that of our forefathers. We have cause on this natal day for congratulation, little for regret and none for apology. Our great country has but

just concluded the celebration of its grand Columbian year. Beside the things of the past have been set the things of the present. The old has been compared with the new. Each step in the great era of progress has been shown by the greatest exposition the world ever looked upon.

The glory that comes from the demonstration there made, that this is the foremost nation of the earth belongs to no single place or section. The four hundred years that had passed witnessed this great development when other countries were already old on the race of the globe.

The growth, advancement and progress of these United States gives us all a just cause for pride. The works of today, contrasted with those of days gone by, promise accomplishments for the future that almost surpass belief.

What part has been played by our townsmen? What impress has been made by this community? I call your attention to the fact that the founders of Rehoboth established here a government based upon principles that were never abandoned. They believed in a people's government and carried it fearlessly and unflinchingly into effect. It required no ordinary courage for the colonists to leave their homes for an unknown shore. The fortitude with which they met all adversity compels our admiration. The pioneers in these fields had no thought of conquest; they did not seek riches; they were not filled with greed for plunder. To despoil, pre-empt and rob was no part of their purpose. Devoted to principle, they had left their mother country to escape persecution.

Non-conformists to the religious views of the majority of their fellows, they sought a home where they might believe and worship as they pleased. Stout-hearted and

courageous, they braved the seas for the new world. Others there were who had preceded them and become as arrogant as those from whom they had fled. Forgetting the protest they had made against those above them, they domineered with increasing stringency when they held power themselves.

Your first white settler, William Blackstone, left England because he couldn't endure the "Lord bishops," and although he was quite a landed proprietor in Boston, he left his fellows there, saying "I cannot join with you, because I would not be under the "Lord brethren."

The home he established in the wilderness near the river which takes his name was dedicated to the quietness of study.

When Newman and his followers came from Weymouth, they were bent on organizing a community where the rights of conscience should be respected. Boston and Lynn had become unbearably intolerant. The bitter experience of John Myles, and the trials of Roger Williams, tempest tossed in the depths of winter, were painful examples of the dire penalties meted out to heretics.

Purchasing the land from Massachusetts, by honest covenant, they carried into effect the purposes for which they had journeyed thither. In order that there might be a fair distribution, they had, at a meeting held before they left Weymouth, laid the preliminaries for the division and apportionment of the lands they were to occupy.

This same Weymouth meeting, in 1643, passed by a vote of the planters an order for the support of the schools. The schoolmaster was made fifth in the list of land-owners.

This was the first vote in all the world for the establishment of free public schools by public taxation. All had to contribute, whether the father of a family or not.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony, four years afterward, made the same enactment.

To Massachusetts has always been conceded the honor of being the first in that great system. To Rehoboth belongs the credit of inaugurating that grand institution, now freely acknowledged to be first in importance of any department under our government.

Regulations and laws were made for their mutual benefit and protection, but none for ostracizing any person on account of his beliefs. The little band held dear the tenets of their faith.

They directed their hands and thoughts to employment and education. To these they remained steadfast. Thus were developed those traits of character which gave the basis to the achievements done within these borders. No witch was ever hanged in Rehoboth; no Quaker was ever tortured here; no heretic was ever whipped here. Bent upon a plan of cultivation and improvement, it was never forsaken for the base uses of trampling upon the weak and struggling, to their own enrichment. No dissension or contention disrupted their numbers. The little community existed by the fruits of its own labors, and had no thought of trouble.

A glance at their condition at this time is not like reading a tale that is closed, without moral and pointing no useful lesson. Their method was adhered to and acquiesced in by all. Accident or chance had no part in their doings. They were directly under the control of the

Plymouth court, which was conducted with marked liberality. The land grant of Massasoit was confirmed by the court.

Although a general settlement was made in 1643, it was not until a year later that the town was fairly organized. The year following, 1645, the commissioners of the United Colonies formally incorporated the town under its present scriptural name, Rehoboth. It included the territory now comprised in the following towns: Seekonk, East Providence, Pawtucket, Cumberland, Attleboro, North Attleboro, Swanzey, Somerset, Barrington and Warren. Each succeeding year the number of land proprietors increased. The necessary town officials were regularly elected. The records show that all claimed title to land by virtue of purchase, and that a system of recording was adopted which was a perpetual assurance of the owner's rights.

Wamsutta, the son of Massasoit, ratified the deed of his father.

Each land-holder held his possessions by strict right, and no one questioned it. The quiet home life they had sought seemed to be guaranteed them. Strange to say their thrift proved their only menace. It was because they built houses, fenced their lots and extended their fields that the enmity of the crafty King Philip was incurred. His father, Massasoit, and his brother, Wamsutta, saw nothing harmful in the presence of industrious, frugal and honest neighbors.

Newman had named the town Rehoboth, because in the Hebrew it meant "a large place," and he piously proclaimed, "The Lord has made room for us." The old chieftain and his eldest son never doubted but what there

was room enough for all ; but Philip saw with jealous eyes the day not far distant when there would be no room for the Indians. He had ratified the covenant of purchase given by his father and brother, and had seemed to be friendly, but his disposition changed ; he hated with all the vengeance of his vile nature. He struck the blow ; the torch was applied ; houses were destroyed ; lives were taken whose only offense had been that they had dared to use the strength of mind and muscle that God had given them for the improvement of their condition.

Philip is said to have been remarkably endowed. He was keen, crafty, sagacious and resourceful. He had once before cleverly allayed suspicion by surrendering his arms when he was accused of preparing war against the whites. There can be no doubt his bloody plans had long been maturing. He had thoroughly united all the tribes of the Indians from Plymouth to the Connecticut river. Sausaman, his fellow Indian, after his supposed conversion, returned to Philip only to again abandon wild life and rejoin the settlers. When he was shortly afterwards found murdered in Middleboro, the crime was traced to several Indians. Their guilt being proven, they were executed. From that time Philip made no effort to conceal his hatred.

The war he waged was furious and relentless. The year that followed was one of horror. The frenzy of the red man thoroughly aroused, inspired him to deeds of awful barbarity. He despoiled with demon-like atrocity. From his headquarters on Mount Hope, Philip directed the slaughter. Thirteen towns were pillaged. Six hundred colonists were killed. The same number of houses were reduced to ashes. This section was the scene of de-



vastation and ruin. The war was commenced and ended within the confines of the original town of Rehoboth.

The terrors of that winter cannot be adequately pictured. Vigilance was never abated until the twelfth of August of seventy-six, when Philip was killed by Captain Church's company. With the capture of Annawan, sixteen days later, almost at your very doors, and but a few miles from the spot where we are now gathered, the war was closed. Rehoboth furnished thirty men, who served with valor and distinction. Subjected to great privation and ceaseless anxiety, they had spent the year. The end of the struggle saw the people impoverished, but not disheartened.

With saddened hearts the work of reconstruction was commenced. Undismayed by hardship, they built anew. Calamity had not discouraged them. With commendable energy they labored.

Fortunately the next one hundred years saw nothing of war. Peace and progress reigned supreme. It is not written that much of historical interest transpired between this period and the Revolution. What effect it would have made upon the after growth of the town and vicinity had the State House been built here when the Massachusetts bay and Plymouth colonies united in 1692, can only be a matter of conjecture. Boston was the largest of the one and Rehoboth the largest of the other colony. A spirited contest was made by the aspirants of each for the honor of being the State Capital; it was developed that Boston had a few votes the most and won the prize.

A continental congress was held in Rehoboth in October, 1709. At just what point they assembled is a



matter of doubt. The town grew in size and influence. Highways were built and new settlements appeared. The names of the residents at this time are in a great part familiar. Many there are present directly descended from this sturdy band. Successive generations, filled with an abiding love, have remained faithful to the old town. Rehoboth's people are not rovers by disposition. Through the long years they have trod the walks of their ancestors.

The trials of that colonial era were forming a substantial character that has been transmitted from generation to generation. The vicissitudes that had been undergone, the obstacles that had been overcome, were producing a marked type of humanity.

The time was coming to shake off the yoke of oppression. The preliminary murmurs of the impending struggle for independence were heard in the land. It was manifest that a crisis in their affairs was near at hand. The policy of the colonies could not be determined in a day.

Opportunity for conferences was limited ; methods of travel primitive, the conveyance of news slow and infrequent. It was not every man who stood ready for battle. Some counseled caution and more deliberation. One man's influence counted for little beyond his immediate circle ; the voice of a community stood for everything ; there was no uncertainty of the attitude of New England and no hesitancy on the part of the town of Rehoboth. The legislative representative of the town was quickly advised, in Boston, that James Otis was indorsed : a military company was organized and the town stood to resist the might of tyranny as against the right of man and family. Had not their fathers left the only home they knew for a dwelling or home in reality with all that

implies? Had not the Indian all but destroyed it beyond redemption? In all things they had triumphed under the banner of right, and should they, their sons, now surrender?

. The wholesome, patriotic ideas that were deeply instilled in their minds forbade such a thought. The minute men of Concord and Lexington were not trained soldiers. They left their plows to take up the musket. All men know the story of that gallant conflict. It was the same kind of patriot that the process of the years was making in the town of Rehoboth.

Fortunately the desolation of war did not come to these borders. The peace so much coveted was not disturbed. Myles bridge and garrison house, as truly historic as Lexington common, ere not to be again the theater of combat.

We can imagine the thrill of exultation with which our ancestors received the news that justice had prevailed; that England had relinquished her efforts to compel allegiance. How their hearts must have been gladdened at the thought of freedom! They had sought to sever every tie of religious and civil relationship that bound them to the land of kings; they had longed for liberty of conscience. To entirely escape the old, and be unmolested in the new life was their greatest hope and fondest desire. It is true that their neighbors had not always met them in the frank, open spirit of the Plymouth colony, but there was no division of opinion, they thought as one—on the subject of resisting absolute subjugation by Great Britain. When the time had come for battle it found them a band of brothers united; standing steadfast and undivided.



ESEK H. PIERCE.



Right successfully resisted might. Then as the smoke of battle cleared away it must have dawned gloriously upon the faithful men and women that thereafter they were to be assured immunity from inter-colonial interference; that the birth of a great republic should see the acknowledgement, without question, of the right of all men "to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

They were diligent in the management of the affairs of the town. All efforts were made for the encouragement of industry and education that their means would permit. The slender salaries of the parson, the doctor and the schoolmaster amuse us, but they were paid by the labors of honest toilers who could spare no larger. They freely gave the utmost they could afford. Their deep appreciation of the equity of a people's government is displayed in the conduct of the town meetings. Stringent provisions were made for compelling attendance. The greatest regard was had for a full, fair and honest debate. Their belief in the honesty of majority rule lead them to invite the fullest discussion of all matters up for consideration. It was very essential that the accurate sentiment of the majority be obtained. It is reported that there was great unity in their deliberations and a remarkable absence of discord or honest difference of opinion. All were imbued with the same patriotic instincts and each strove diligently for the common good. The town meeting is the ideal government. Every man speaks for himself. His views are presented directly to his fellows. Each can learn from the other by actual presence, sight and hearing, the force of his convictions, his manner, sincerity and purpose are on exhibition. The opportunity for the minutest investigation is had without the intervention of a representative. Of course, when, as in modern days, the

population of the districts and cities becomes large, the people must delegate their powers, in the city, state and nation, to act for them in the councils, legislature and congress. It cannot be controverted, however, that the town meeting is the highest example of the perfection of a government of the people, by the people and for the people. The number of those who do not attend are a small proportion of a town's inhabitants.

The townsman goes interested and determined to act as his best judgment shall dictate. As communities increase in size and the necessity of a government by representation arises, the keen attention of the voters is diverted from the subjects passed upon. With some one to act for them there is no necessity to do for themselves, and it is too often true that the agents do not respect the wishes of the principals. The constituency is not infrequently ignored by the legislator. In a town meeting each man represents himself and together all represent the town.

The doings are for what is conceived to be the right. No townsman meaningly prejudices the town; no man intentionally robs himself. Rehoboth's people have an enviable record for their wise control of her corporate affairs. There has been no anticipation of alliance with the cities. There has been constant and close attention on your part to the needs of the present.

Wisdom has characterized your use of the prerogatives of citizenship. Fidelity to honorable principles has been an inheritance that has equipped each generation for laudable endeavor whenever occasion has demanded. Educated in an atmosphere of honesty and integrity, you have sent energetic and able men, who have won wealth and distinction in other fields. They have reflected credit on the place of their birth and added strength and dignity to the

homes of their adoption. They have been well schooled in the practical phases of life and went admirably qualified to cope with the busy throng wherever fortune should send them. At home and abroad these people have been of the bone and sinew that seeks to build firmly, soundly and enduringly ; who were content to produce ; who aimed to do all things well. This firm solidity of character has, in the process of evolution, given us remarkable specimens of manhood.

A brief consideration of a few honored names furnishes us with examples from which we may learn with profit.

The pronounced individuality of William Blackstone, the Newmans, father and son, Roger Williams, John Myles and Thomas Willett, has often been recalled. Far in advance of their times in mental growth they have come down to posterity as marvels of consistency. They deprecated warfare, and preferred pacific means, but in defense of home they possessed that staunch courage which braves all suffering with unswerving calmness. Over the grave of William Blackstone now stands an imposing shaft ; it is inscribed to the first white settler of Rhode Island. The tribute to his worth is richly deserved. As the foremost illustrious quartet, which included with him Newman, Myles and Willett, he is rightfully entitled to all homage and enduring memory. This noble four, the contemporaries of Roger Williams, his firm friends and close in his counsel and esteem, are as notable exponents of the cause of liberty as history anywhere discloses. They have not been accorded their full measure of praise ; their names are not as familiar and as oft repeated as others who gave their lives to the same cause.



There are other parts of this commonwealth better known and more generally spoken of, which have been favored with a continued recital of the deeds of men of glorious character, of towering luster, who have brought renown to their particular locality ; name and place have become coupled and inseperable. Without boasting, but with becoming modesty, you have the privilege of demanding that all hearts be turned with appropriate regard to a lasting remembrance of these grand freemen.

James Brown, Obadiah Holmes and John Hazell suffered bodily for daring to assert their manhood as their convictions compelled them. They bore their troubles stoically, and sought a refuge in Rehoboth, where no man was harassed. Walter Palmer, the first deputy to Plymouth court, was a man of ripe judgment and great good sense.

Stephen Bullock, judicially minded and able, represented with great satisfaction his district in congress. Phanuel Bishop, also in the halls of the national house of representatives, was a wise and studious legislator.

I should like, if the time permitted to speak of townsmen of recent date of the typical names of Pierce, Bullock, Davis, Horton, Goff, Bliss, Carpenter, Miller, Wheaton, Hunt, Thurber, Peck, Robinson, Perry and others, whose acquaintance I have enjoyed. Our distinguished chief justice of the superior court, Albert Mason, traces his ancestry to the Samson Mason of Cromwell's army, who early settled here.

The state of Rhode Island has elevated to the governor's chair a Rehoboth man in the person of "Honest John Davis." What higher encomium could man desire ? What prouder title could attach to integrity.

You have been sensible of the value of relics of former days ; you have desired to preserve the mementos of antiquarian values. The society you have organized is of inestimable worth ; its work will materially promote the cause of education in the town.

The loyalty of Darius Goff in defraying the greater part of the cost of this memorial building, which takes his name, cannot be too highly commended. His was a character fine and sensitive.

Constituted with a lasting pride in Rehoboth, he gave freely.

When it became manifest that the people, filled with enthusiasm, were bound to secure an edifice for town purposes ; when he saw that a subscription from the common purse was gladly forthcoming, he readily gave from his abundance the sums that made so fine a structure possible.

It was the assurance that the interest was general that appealed to him ; the fact that all the people greeted the idea with pleasure, and were ready to contribute as their means would allow, was to him the convincing evidence of the wisdom of building largely and well.

Generous and wise man that he was, he delayed not ; he saw the people use this building ; he had the pleasure of sharing their gratification. Standing near the spot where his father before him and his brothers with him had commenced and carried into execution the industry, which in after years had, in the cities, made wealth for him and employment for many, it is indeed fitting that in this hour of reminiscence, we feel and acknowledge our profound appreciation of his sterling worth and merit. I have spoken of the all-important fact that must become

indelibly impressed upon the mind of the reader of history that the Rehoboth man is endowed with the greatest reverence for the sanctity of home; that he is unalterably opposed to oppression.

Outside of the ordinary pursuits of the home and farm he has made his influence felt and his word of consequence and moment. The industries of Pawtucket and Providence have had substantial indorsers in Rehoboth men; they have put time and capital into the channels of business that built up these cities and caused them to flourish. The first mill in Fall River had subscribers for one-fourth of its capital stock from this town.

The men of this town have never lacked courage to engage in that which involves labor; they are so constituted that, they are not awed by task.

I have endeavored to relate, with some attention to their chronological order, the instances and occurrences of their domestic life that have seemed to me important. I have told of the attitude they assumed when they have suffered encroachment, whether as a community in particular, or as a part of our nation in general. In the last great civil strife, the war of the rebellion, Rehoboth furnished her full quota of men.

With a population of fifteen hundred souls, she sent a goodly number to shoulder the musket for their country. To those of us who recall the days of that trying period, it seems but a short time since the marching troops returned. Back from the horrid ordeal of waging cruel warfare against their own countrymen--men of the same great national family, having the same ambitions, alike honorable, and the equal of any in social and political status. Divided on the question of the abolition of the

slave trade, one part of the country opposing another, sectional hate once aroused, soon swept away all thoughts of former unity.

The remembrance of their power when all hearts beat for a mutual cause, held no power to stay the threatening storm. It was useless to try to avert the necessity of a resort to force. There was no cowardice on the part of either north or south. Since the days of the "Father of his Country," the southern suns had beheld the colored man the property of his white brother, who was not wanting in refinement and sensibility. Distinguished men who had inherited, owned, bought, bartered and sold the slave in precisely the same manner as other property. People became habituated to their surroundings; they grew accustomed to the uses and practices about them. By no word or argument could the position of either great section be made plain to the other. The Union was threatened, it must be preserved.

The pitiable spectacle of brother against brother in deadly affray was only terminated after bloodshed yet fresh in mind. The present generation has eagerly sought a rehearsal of its every detail; the world of literature has retold the story from every standpoint,—the grim chronicles having a fascinating interest to the student of his country's history.

The abhorrent and unholy traffic in human life was forever stopped in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Secession was prevented; the Union was maintained. The victory, however, had been for principle instead of power.

The proud privilege of wearing the button and the badge is each year vouchsafed to a smaller band. On

each succeeding observance of the veterans' holiday fewer hands there are to place the flowers, and more graves there are to decorate. May Decoration Day teach to the sons who take up the fathers' work, the beauty of heroic love for country; may it prove a potent factor in inspiring us all to deeds of loyal duty; may the necessity of facing the blight of war again be long postponed. Thirty years have since gone by,—years that have seen but little change in the physical appearance of the town. Your population, uncentralized, clings to the localities identified with family tradition. Surrounded by the evidence of the honorable past, you pursue uninterruptedly the vocations of your choice. You have gathered and arranged in this hall antique records and relics that stimulate in us a veneration for our fathers. The objects of interest carry our minds to the days when they fought against dangers that we shall never know. The library is commemorative of the free hearted and illustrious name of Blanding, and contains the chronicles of trials bravely met and patiently overcome.

Our thoughts are turned devotedly to the inheritance that has come down to us. Amidst this environment there is inspiration for the future. The legacy that is ours points a golden pathway of promise. We live in a great epoch of improvement. Science has made great discoveries; invention has rendered great mechanical problems easy of solution. On every hand the onward march of civilization is observed. As the foremost nation of the earth, we are but yet in our infancy. There is much to be done to render easier, more just and equitable, the condition of all men. The relations between capital and labor are not such as the enlightenment of the cen-

ture requires. The extension of the grand system of arbitration is to be perfected.

Great work remains to be done to limit the increase of poverty. The control of criminality by universal education, and many other great problems, are engrossing public attention. Science is constantly producing more wonderful phenomena and improvement in mechanics is the order of the day. Human ingenuity has succeeded in abridging distance by marvelous advancement in the art of building conveyances for travel on land and sea. On every hand we see the realization of projects that have been considered beyond the scope of man's ability to complete. Great as has been our progress, it is not within the bounds of prophecy to predict with any degree of accuracy with what success we shall yet advance.

The world grows wiser from many trying experiences. Each disaster has its compensating lesson. Every calamity emphasizes the method of its prevention in the future. We should have few safe-guards if no accidents happened to show their necessity. It is not human to fortify against that which is not likely to occur. We defend against the things our daily life has taught us are liable to take place.

With what success we render our existence the more secure depends entirely upon our intelligence as a people. The ability to take heed of passing events, to utilize for present employment and future perfection is not an universal gift. The men who shape the policy of trade: the minds that direct the course of business, are not equipped by chance. Hard and persistent work has been the only pathway that leads to success. The thoroughly reliable man in whatever sphere of action has gained his qualification only through constant application. A work that re-

quires quick and decisive action cannot be properly performed by one except he has trained himself in each successive channel that leads to the result he would attain. Intuitive genius and keen perception are faculties that in many amount to talent.

As auxiliary accomplishments they may be of the greatest service in whatever capacity they are applied. Tact, which in its broadest cultivation we are wont to call diplomacy, is often of a utility that works benefit to the cause in which it is exercised. We often stand amazed at the variety of acquirements one man may possess ; we are moved to wonder at the facility with which he can surmount a portion of the difficulties which are spread in life's pathway. Such instances are numerous ; our admiration is challenged ; we are pleased to contemplate the qualities displayed and are in turn moved to regret the inadequacy of the whole man.

The hand that points the way in any given line is seldom conspicuous by a great array of adornments. The efficiency of a well trained mind lies in the equal distribution of the qualities needed. The prominence the few gifts bring to the possessor is dimmed if as an entirety he is deficient ; the talents intensify the defect.

There can be no loftier work to demand a town's attention than the persistent effort to foster and promote the fundamental precepts that lead to the grandeur of self-reliant and dignified manhood. The safety and protection of our country, the perpetuation of her institutions, depend not alone on zeal and tireless energy : respect for principle, love of right and truth, home and family, kindness, consideration, sympathy and charity must be cherished and not allowed to decay. There is no place like the vil-



age and the town in which the virtues that make substantial citizenship can be so well matured.

Here you have no confidence in the base and artificial ; you dismiss the counterfeit and strive for the true and the genuine.

My friends, I commend to you the continued reverence for your ancestors ; I congratulate you on your present material prosperity ; I bespeak for you further contentment and happiness in the good old town of Rehoboth.

Sampson Mason,

*Exile from Dorchester 1657*

*Leave to sojourn at Rehoboth*

*Dec. 9, 1657.*

Remarks of Albert Mason,

*one of his descendants*

*Oct. 3, 1894 at the celebration*

*of the 250th Anniversary of the  
settlement of Rehoboth.*

CITIZENS OF REHOBOTH :—

A record which I cannot question, denies me the distinction of nativity in this historic town. My humble claim of duty and pleasure to have share in your five-fold jubilee, rests upon a simple vote of Rehoboth passed Dec. 9, 1657, “ *That Sampson Mason have free liberty to sojourn with us.*”

The language is suggestive and significant, and truth compels me to admit that my ancestor was at that time deemed unworthy of citizenship in the colony of Massachusetts. He was an adjudged heretic under sentence of banishment. He came to you a homeless exile, and you gave him free liberty to sojourn with you. Those of his faith who had preceded him in Rehoboth had not proved altogether peacemakers, but the broad spirit of tolerance which had characterized the settlement was not exhausted, and it cheerfully bore this further test. Seven years before the sturdy soldier fresh from service in the parliamentary army under Fairfax, had settled in Dorchester.

Macaulay in that scathing paragraph upon the days

which followed the restoration of Charles II, says, "The government has just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute." The colony of Massachusetts surely had more than this quantum of religion, but the rigid Puritan, earnest for freedom to live up to his own religious convictions, was not as ready to accord the same freedom to others as was the separatist Pilgrim of the earlier colony. Narrow formulas of doctrine were inadequate to the spiritual thirst of the scholarly Newman. He sought less restricted means of reaching infinite stores of truth in the Divine Word. He saw in his experience a likeness to that of Isaac when his herdsmen strove with those of Gerar over successive wells insufficient for the natural thirst of animals, until a well was digged equal to the needs of all "*And for that they strove not, and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, for now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.*" Two years after Newman and his flock withdrew to find here the Rehoboth which he sought, the hard lines of the restrictive puritan polity found embodiment in a standing law of the colony, that any who should openly condemn or oppose the baptizing of infants, or should purposely depart the congregation at the administration of that ordinance, should on due conviction be sentenced to banishment. Sampson Mason had become a Baptist while in the army. The characteristic tenet of the denomination at that period was not with reference to the mode of administering the ordinance nor the logical consequence of its administration by an insufficient mode, but was the doctrine upon this very question of baptizing those incapable of assenting to the spiritual purification which the ordinance signified. I trust it is no surprise to those who have known his descendants in Rehoboth and Swansea, to learn that what

Sampson Mason condemned or opposed he condemned or opposed openly, and that he was obstinate therein and incurred the sentence of banishment. He came hither with his wife, Mary Butterworth. They then had three sons. Five other sons and four daughters were born in Rehoboth. Ten years later he was of those who under the leadership of John Myles set up separate worship. At the friendly suggestion of the court at Plymouth, the church gathered by Myles was transferred "to some place not already in parish relations." This place proved to be the unoccupied region south of the present Rehoboth, which became the town of Swansea. Sampson Mason did not remove to the new town until 1672 or later. In his will dated Oct. 22nd of that year he is described as of Rehoboth, but he gives to his oldest son Noah "my house which is shortly to be built in Swansea or that house wherein I do now dwell, that is to say, that house which his mother my said wife shall order him to take." Lands in Rehoboth and Swansea were devised to eight sons and due provision made for four daughters. Sampson Mason died in 1676, but his widow lived to a good old age dying in 1714. He was the close friend of his pastor John Myles, of James Brown, and of John Butterworth his brother-in-law. Nearly all his children settled in Swansea or Rehoboth and reared families. His numerous descendants under many names have intermarried with nearly all the older families of Rehoboth, and our kindred are beyond enumeration.

The church established by Myles was broad and catholic in its membership, but its location was not central as the town was afterward settled, and not many years after the death of Myles and his immediate associates, a second church was instituted wherein a still greater effort was made to gather a small community not of uniform faith

into one Christian fold. Christian character only was required for admission and no doctrinal tests were applied. A son of Sampson Mason was the second pastor of this church and for more than a century the pastorate was in his charge or that of nephews bearing the family name.

Of my ancestry bearing the name of Mason in this country, five generations lived and died in Rehoboth or Swansea, and the remaining six had nativity in the neighboring city, so kindred in origin and in spirit. My great grandfather, Noble Mason, found his wife Lydia Thurber, in the parent town. My grandfather Aaron Thurber Mason, returned hither to secure my grandmother Mary Bullock, one of whose sisters was the mother of Darius Goff whose name is gratefully perpetuated this in beautiful memorial building, and another sister was the grandmother of the distinguished ex-governor of Rhode Island who is to follow me. This lineage is not ancient as old world families measure lineage, it is not famous as the world counts distinction, but it covers nearly the whole period of New England life and is intensely New England in character. For nearly two centuries it is in and of the local life of this community, reflecting its quiet tone, and may I not hope something of its sterling quality. If one may not be proud of an inheritance, nor puffed up with that which he hath not earned, it is an inheritance in which I have much satisfaction, and I gladly accept the duty and privilege of bringing hither my grateful tribute to the memory of the founders of the peaceful haven which the pious leader called Rehoboth, in recognition that the Lord had there given him and his flock emancipation from strife and contention.

To the sainted Newman, to his loyal and liberal asso-

ciates, and to you their successors and descendants, I return grateful acknowledgment that Sampson Mason had free liberty to sojourn in Rehoboth.



John W. Davis





## An Address By Hon. John W. Davis.

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS OF REHOBOTH:—

There are no greetings so warm as those of one's own kith and kin, and no homes so bright as those of our youthful recollections, indeed with the full tide of this day's celebration upon me, I might falter in my allegiance to my residential Town and State, did I not remember that in part, Pawtucket was once part and parcel of that "Antient Rehoboth," whose original settlement is now within Rhode Island limits. In the remarks I may submit, I purpose to speak of "Antient Rehoboth," from a colonial standpoint, or of "Antient Rehoboth" and her early colonists, as a steppingstone to Rhode Island and founders of religious liberty in America.

Rehoboth,—the name we are told implies a wide-open-roomy-place, and for a name I think our fathers chose better than they knew, for Rehoboth proved to be an open door to broad thoughts and principles, as well as an ample homestead to its colonists.

Locally, "Antient Rehoboth" bounded — approximately—upon a line from Woonsocket Falls on the Blackstone, to Dighton's famous rock upon the Taunton river, and included all the lands southward to the shores of Narragansett Bay, Pokonoket, (which Ossamequin and his sons had reserved for their homes,)—only excepted.

It is not my province to trace the history of the town; the orator of this occasion and others preceding me have attended to that, but at the risk of repeating "twice told tales" I will venture some commentaries upon Rehoboth's

colonists and their characteristics, in the early days of the town.

“Antient Rehoboth” was a sort of debatable borderland between the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies upon the east and north, and the Plantations of Providence and Rhode Island on the west and south respectively, to which, such colonists as the “brethren of the Bay” thought not quite good enough to dwell with them in full fellowship—but yet not so wholly bad and lost to grace as to deserve banishment to the outer darkness of Rhode Island—were suffered to come as to a city of refuge to sojourn for a season with the hope of light.

It is known that for years before the Pilgrims came to Plymouth, voyaging fishermen and traders had been sailing up and down these coasts, trafficking with the natives and wittingly or unwittingly by their introduction of the sins of civilization (largely condensed in ardent spirits and pestilence) prepared the way for European colonization.

So too, before the Rev. Samuel Newman and his people came from Weymouth and Hingham into this region, there were pioneers in the land, frontiersmen, like Daniel Boone of Kentucky, who felt crowded when neighbors came too near, or “had settled within thirty miles of his cabin.”

Among the pioneers of “Antient Rehoboth” was William Blackstone, famous for his declaration that he “left England to be free of the Lord Bishops, and Boston to be clear of the Lord Brethren.”

Blackstone was in no sense a hermit, but a scholarly gentleman, a priest of the English Church and who like a patriarch prophet of old loved best to commune with

nature in God's solitudes, (which were no solitudes to him) for the mind of the Creator in every phase of nature breathed responsive to his thoughts. He eschewed man and society not for their humility, but because of their pride and pretensions, as his declarations, (which give us a better insight into his life and character than pages of history could do,) so plainly indicate.

Roger Williams too, with his friends first came this way and planted within the limits of what afterwards became Rehoboth. Having been advised by Governor Winthrop, his personal friend, (though unable to protect him against the prejudices of the "brethren") to go to the Narragansett Country, he came here and supposed he had found it beside the tide-waters of the beautiful Seekonk, but being warned by Governor Winslow that he was within the Plymouth grant, and by him advised ("to please the brethren of the Bay") to cross the river, he did so to get beyond their jurisdiction, and there planted the Plantations of Providence, and then and thus it was in the first instance, that Rehoboth became a steppingstone to Rhode Island, for the founders of Christian freedom, a position she afterwards industriously occupied for many years.

Some have argued from a few words used by Williams in an account of his sufferings on his journey of exile, that he came to Seekonk by sea, sailing out from Salem in an open shallop, with his friends in mid-winter, across the boisterous Massachusetts Bay, around Cape Cod, along the treacherous coasts of Malabar, thence through the then little known Vineyard Sound and Gosnold's Islands, onward around the *wreck-rocks* of Sakonett and up the

Narragansett to Seekonk, but the improbabilities not to say the impracticabilities of the voyage discredit the theory.

Blackstone and Williams were both notables of the same colony and times, they knew each other well and were bound together by the strong ties of a common calling and sufferings. Men may rejoice together and be glad, aye, feast and forget, but they who together have endured a common hardship or suffered a grievous wrong are linked together in bonds which naught but death can sever, a comity of feelings which bury all other differences. With these conditions controlling, there can hardly be a reasonable doubt, but that Williams and his followers came direct from Salem to Blackstone's home (which for prudential reasons was not advertised) and from there went out to find their own retreat upon the banks of the same beautiful stream which flowed by the door of their friend.

Blackstone's home was on the east shore of the river, two miles north of Pawtucket Falls, Williams planted on the same bank two miles below, why this distance between? Was it as with Abram and righteous Lot that their herdsmen might not quarrel? Allow me to suggest that another was already there, Pawtucket was covered by the homestead of John Hasel, a man like his illustrious neighbors (though not a minister) of finest sensibilities as his subsequent history shows.

When Hasel came to Pawtucket we cannot tell, nor certainly that he was there when Williams came, but we may reasonably infer it, from the fact that first comers into a new territory, take first choice of location, and with the due modesty of a Pawtucket man, I think it may be allowed me to say that the particular choice spot of

“Antient Rehoboth” was this self-same Pawtucket site—John Hazel had it—“ergo” Hazel was the first frontiersman, indeed it may have been he who piloted Blackstone to his riverside home. Be this as it may, certain it is that he was there present as principal interlocutor and witnessed the treaty of John Brown and his Weymouth friends with Ossamequin (alias Massasoit) for the township in 1641, three years before Newman with his friends came to Rehoboth—that he was in Plymouth in August in 1642 to give an account of his surroundings and belongings in the land,—and again in November of the same year he was before the Plymouth Court and required to profess his allegiance to the colony and fealty to the church—requirements upon the part of the Plymouth Colony which substantially give us the key to his status and character as one not theretofore of the colony or communion, but a frontiersman at Pawtucket upon the borders of the civilized settlements

The people of the church of Mr. Newman rather than Newman himself, were of the Pilgrim of Plymouth type of Congregationalists as contradistinguished from that of the Puritans of the Bay, and that there was a marked difference between them every student of New England history well knows. But marked as this difference may have been, that between Plymouth and Rehoboth in the same direction, (along the lines of a broader Christian charity) was even wider, and the reason for this feature in the Rehoboth Society is readily traceable to their antecedents in Weymouth—of which our friend Harris from that town has here to-day given us an inkling.

The church in Weymouth had been a perturbed Society, several ministers within its brief existence had taken it in charge, the Court of Plymouth had found occasion

to intervene in its affairs, and in 1637-8 one Hazard Knollys, a Baptist preacher from London had been in the colony publishing his sentiments, which took root in that town, and a church in sympathy with his ideas had been tentatively organized there, though later suppressed by prudential measures of the Plymouth Court.

Knollys returned to England in 1639—but his winnowings and siftings from amongst the Weymouth and Hingham people very generally joined in the exodus to Rehoboth and as was natural they took their predilections along with them, the croppings out of which later, gave Mr. Newman all his trouble.

However, Newman if not dominant was prominent among his people, and in 1650—only six years after the settlement of the town, a complaint was lodged at Plymouth Court against John Hasel—Obediah Holmes—Joseph Torry—John Spurr—and others of Newman's parishioners and they were there severally arraigned for heresy—but the Court wiser than the parties complainant, contented itself by administering moutions, and accepting their prisoners as bondsmen for each other (a sort of "round robin" arrangement) permitted them to return to their Rehoboth homes in peace. Evidently the brethren of the Bay, some of them having been parties to the complaint, were indignant at this Plymouth tolerance, and waiting their chance, to make an example, in July 1651—arrested Obediah Holmes, with two friends—Clarke and Crandall from Newport, R. I.—at Lynn, and brought them to Boston, where they were charged with contumacy and for preaching without a license in Massachusetts, this they did not conceal or deny, and thereupon they were sentenced—Crandall to a fine of £5,—Clarke £20,—and Holmes £50 to be paid on or before the next General Court, or in de-



fault they were to be severally severely whipped—a most unchristian sentence.

Subsequently Crandall was released under bonds which were afterward paid—Clarke's friends rallied and paid his fine for him, and thus the Rhode Island men were got off—but poor Holmes of Rehoboth, manifestly had more scruples than shillings, he refused to pay his fine or to allow others to pay it for him lest it should be deemed an admission of fault upon his part, he was kept in jail until October, then taken out, stripped, tied to a post and most inhumanly whipped, thirty lashes, blood springing at every stroke, as was stated at the time.

I know that a statement like this in the light of to-day sounds questionable, but for its verity in every particular I cite you the Rev. Doctor Benedict's "History of the Baptists," published in 1813, and the authorities quoted therein, Dr. Benedict was for many years a most estimable Baptist minister of Pawtucket, and especially distinguished for his probity, charity, scholarship and conscientiousness, and particularly was he one who would not write without authority or wantonly color an historic narrative to abuse or extenuate.

Among the friends of Holmes who went from Rehoboth to Boston to intercede for a remission of the brutal sentence was our own John Hasel, the veteran pioneer settler of Pawtucket, but to his prayer both Church and State were obdurate, and all that he could do was to afford his friend and neighbor such support and consolation as the countenance of his presence protesting against the outrage could give.

The cruelty of this chastisement and its infliction cut Hasel even more keenly than it did its more

immediate victim, and when the tragedy was over, Hasel like the good Samaritan that he was, stepped forward in the silence of speechless grief and took Holmes by the hand. For this expression of sympathy—though he had said not a word—he was forthwith arrested and cast into prison, but grief for him had done its perfect work, the iron had entered his soul, his heart was broken, in prison his mind wandered, he sank rapidly, and his persecutors affrighted at the result of their diabolism, hastened to turn him out of the prison house, but it was too late, the load was more than he could bear, and he bowed his head and died, in Boston, a victim of “man’s inhumanity to man,” and so it came that Obediah Holmes shed the first martyr blood, and John Hasel was the first to lay down his life in martyrdom for religious liberty in the English Colonies in America, and these men be it ever remembered, were of the pioneers of this ancient town, and friends and neighbors of our ancestors in Rehoboth.

Now, after the lapse of more than two centuries, we men of Rehoboth and Rhode Island can look back upon the Boston Puritans dispassionately, and see them like many other sectarians of their day, more zealous than wise, forgetting (if indeed they ever appreciated the import of the text) “vengeance is mine,” they mistook themselves for God’s vicegerents, rather than Christian stewards, and honestly no doubt, thought it to be their duty to stamp out what they deemed heresy, without mercy, and they simply practiced what they preached.

Sectarian feelings, like public opinions vibrate from side to side as the pendulum of a clock, and the higher the swing in one direction, the further the rebounding momentum will carry it in the opposite. In Boston, two centuries ago, the pendulum was swung away up towards

the nineties of bigotry, superstition and intolerance, to-day it is at the other end of the arc, and nowhere on earth is there larger liberty in religious opinion than in Boston, where every phase of belief finds place and scepticism perchance, too willing listeners.

That "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church" was never more manifestly exemplified than in Rehoboth after this Puritan persecution. The people were indignant, men went out far into the woods to meet Holmes and escorted him home as soon as he was able to travel, but poor Hasel returned to his home upon the banks of the beautiful Pawtucket no more, and his vacant place was a potent protest against the great wrong perpetrated. The story of this wicked crime against conscience ran from mouth to mouth, from colony to colony, crossed the great sea, and from every direction protests came echoing back with bitter reverberations and reproach.

Holmes, Torrey and others left Rehoboth and went to Newport, where Holmes lived and officiated acceptably as a Baptist minister for thirty years thereafter.

But while many left Rehoboth as a steppingstone to Rhode Island, others came in across her borders from outside, and Quakers, Baptists and Independents began to abound upon every hand, while the church of Newman was filled with troubles. Indeed it seemed as if the Baptist leaven of Hasel, Blackstone and Williams earlier "free soul" plantings in the soil of the town and permeated the entire earth and people, until all were leavened with the liberal faith.

It is said that at the close of the great conflict of the States, President Lincoln was asked who of all his generals

he esteemed greatest, to which that wise man characteristically answered, "the General People" they who had without stint or question responded to every demand upon their patriotism. So it was in "Antient Rehoboth" in her days of trial; and where all did well it would be invidious to single out names for distinction, but for illustration of Rehoboth's characteristics we may recall a few exemplars.

John Brown, if not an ancestor, was an antitype at least of him "whose soul is marching on." Though always himself a loyal Pilgrim Churchman, he gave unmistakable evidence of the strain of his blood, spirit of independence, Christian charity and courage of conviction, by bravely standing up in Plymouth Court and protesting against an enforced collection of church rates in Rehoboth. Being himself an assistant of the Court, he pledged his estates and honor to make good for seven years any deficiencies of voluntary contributions for the support of public worship in Rehoboth, and had his pledge allowed, and though he died in 1662 his name has never wanted for an honored representative in the Town, State and Nation his wisdom did so much to develop. Richard Bullock was another to protest, and so too was Thomas Willett of whom our orator has so kindly spoken. The Pecks, Joseph and his brothers, were eminent exemplars of the same line of thought, and the descendents of all these, generation by generation have maintained it, and made their's, honored names to bear. Sampson Mason, a stalwart Cromwellian soldier, ancestor of the Judge here present, came into this town in 1657 and lent the weight of his great energy to the cause of religious freedom, and I need not add, that his posterity have been honored amongst us and through all the land wherever they dwell as the best of citizens.

In 1663, the year that Parson Newman died, John

Myles, a Baptist preacher from Wales, came with Nicholas Tanner, Eldad Kingsley and others of his faith, to the little colony of "Antient Rehoboth" and found shelter from the persecutions in their own far-away land. As an indication of the kindly disposition of the church of the town, Myles though not in full fellowship, was invited to preach at stated seasons, in the public meeting house, and did so, holding forth a liberal fellowship to all professed Christian worshippers, as subsequently his church in Swansea did, and has ever done, and this catholicity of spirit has ever since obtained with the ancient parish church of Rehoboth, as a whole, what differences soever may at times have divided its members among themselves.

But outside of ancient Rehoboth, all were not like charitably minded. The brethren of the Bay felt scandalized at these conditions in this town, and Plymouth though exercised in mind and faith, took a conservative course to rid herself of Rehoboth's infidelity. But to do so instead of expatriating the Baptists as the Bay colony had done, she set off to the recalcitrants that goodly southern district of "Antient Rehoboth" which was incorporated in 1667 as the town of Swansea, so named for John Myles' former home in Wales, or otherwise to state the case, Plymouth as a peace offering divided Rehoboth almost equally between the Baptist and Congregationalist Communions of the settlement, to reconcile the people to live in good neighborhood.

Of course the reason of this, the love of peace and charity, was not avowed in the act; (the true reasons for acts of legislation are rarely ever avowed.) None the less that was the underlying cause, of which the town of Swansea was the result and though not all betook themselves to locations in accordance with their thus localized senti-

ments, the general trend of individual opinions were in those directions, as is indicated in the Judge's citation from the will of his ancestor, so aptly stated here to-day.

A few years later in King Philip's war, Capt. Michael Pierce of Weymouth, (being in sympathy with Swansea and Rehoboth sentiments and interests,) came to their assistance, and fought the great fight of the Plain, as our orator has to-day told us. Indeed it was a fight worthy of an epic, a battle to the death, a fight which for courage and devotion had hardly a precedent, or repetition until in our own time, Custer and his command fell upon the plains of the upper Missouri, a victim of like strategy at the hands of the same wild race. But though Capt. Pierce fell, he left a vigorous posterity who later settled in the town their father had sacrificed his life to save, and his descendants inheriting his spirit, have in all their generations been distinguished for their energy, enterprise and intelligence, and a good exemplar of his tribe, I am pleased to note is the honored president of this Society, now in the chair.

About 1690 Jacob Barney Jr. of Salem, where in his youth he had listened to Roger Williams, and later in life been one to assist in establishing the First Baptist Church in Boston, came with his family via Newport to Rehoboth, and purchased a large tract of land on Torry's Creek, west side of Palmer's River near the Swansea Line, where he settled, and some of his descendants still occupy their ancestral acres in the village of Barneysville. The descendants of this family like the others named have been noted for their energy, industry and enterprise, and one of them, our orator, has to-day honored us as an excellent exemplar of his family blood, "may their shadows never grow less." I ought to observe in passing from these family names, that



the Masons, Pierces and Barneys have been noted for the clergymen they have raised up in their generations, and all with the single exception, (so far as I can now recall) of the Rev. James O. Barney who so long graced the pastorate of the Newman Church, Baptists and Independents in doctrine or sentiments.

While speaking of clergymen I think I ought to say a word of the Rev. Elhanan Winchester, who in 1771 was settled over the First Baptist Church in Rehoboth, and long before the churches in Boston had evolved the broader charities of Unitarian Christianity from Trinitarian Calvinism, Winchester had become convinced in his own mind of the final reconciliation of all men to God through Christ, and bravely begun to preach this doctrine here to his people. His sentiments however were not acceptable to his parish as a whole, and he was dismissed. But being an able preacher he did not want for "calls" and proceeded to journey through the Colonies and in England, disseminating his faith with great acceptance. Though Winchester had left Rehoboth his ideas had taken root here and grew, and while never dominant, they have ever been prominent Christian sentiments of Rehoboth people.

This be it remembered was in 1771, the same year in which Hosea Ballou the patriarch preacher of Universalism was born, and thus we see Winchester in Rehoboth had preceded this worthy by a full generation. This I mention to show that the intellect of Rehoboth was of old alert, and even in advance of the religious thought of the age, and it is not undue to say that Universalism as a theology has done as much, if not more, to promote christianity and subvert bigotry, than almost any other sect, a good personal exemplar of which in faith and practice I am glad to see upon this stage, and to in this way recog-



nize my friend the Hon. Nathaniel B. Horton, who honors a family name than which none stands higher in the town.

The proximity of Rhode Island undoubtedly contributed to make ancient Rehoboth the questionable border ground that it was, which while politically, always loyal to Plymouth and the Bay, was yet ever in religious sentiments, more in harmony with the larger liberties of Rhode Island, with whose people their most intimate business and social relations subsisted. In such relations "Antient Rehoboth" and Rhode Island were like two rooms in the same house, occupied by different families indeed, but separated only by the thinnest of political portieres and in kindred the families were so intimately connected and blended, that morally and religiously they were as one.

The intensity of the alike distress and disgust, of Massachusetts at these conditions in Rehoboth, is well illustrated in the "motif" of certain transactions connected with the settlement of the town of Bristol, which though unwritten history, is none the less true as developments show.

When at the close of King Philip's War, Pokonoket, (over which though the Rhode Island Charter plainly covered it, the weightier Colony of Plymouth had always asserted and maintained jurisdiction,) came by conquest to the English, a strife arose between Plymouth, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, as to which should have final jurisdiction over the territory, the dispute was referred to the King, who assigned it to Plymouth, notwithstanding his grant to Rhode Island. Whereupon four notable men of Boston, of whom Nathaniel Byfield was one, in the interest of Puritanism hastened down to Plymouth, and bought



NATHANIEL B. HORTON.



for £1100 the entire tract, and though naturally it should have been municipally joined with Swansea, these men of Boston ignored that town, as they did Rehoboth, as apostate, and at once established a new township which they named Bristol, and proceeded to organize and support it at considerable personal inconvenience and expense. Byfield was chosen Moderator, (which practically meant mastership) of the first Town Meeting and a rate of fifty pounds was voted for the first year, (forty pounds for the use of the church, and ten for all other purposes,) all of this indicated the drift of their purpose to establish Bristol as a sort of outer wall of defense for Massachusetts, against the heresies of Rhode Island, a kind of religious redoubt at the front, or missionary bulwork for the salvation of Swansea and Rehoboth. Of course, as it was in the case of the incorporation of Swansea, the purpose was not avowed, nonetheless, these were the reasons, and Bristol the result, of these reasons practically enforced. To give the town dignity and influence to the ends sought to be established, it was made the Shire Town of the County, which too was called Bristol and included all the territory east of the Blackstone, whose waters drained towards Narragansett Bay, and substantially covered about all of southern Massachusetts, and these political conditions so remained from 1680 to 1746, when the King's Commissioners established the compromise line which gave about an equal part of the territory in dispute to each Colony.

Of Nathaniel Byfield, the leader of the proprietors of ancient Bristol, it deserves to be said that he was not only a zealous Puritan and successful merchant, but a generous hearted and public spirited citizen. When he left Bristol and returned to Boston which he eventually did, he endowed a school in Bristol, which still bears his name, and

is yet a flourishing institution, and an honor to the donor and to the town. It was at this school that Benjamin West (a son of Rehoboth) the distinguished mathematician mentioned here to-day was educated. Nor yet, after Byfield had left Bristol did he lose or abate his interest in education and the Puritan church, but reaching out from Boston he endowed a parish and school in Essex County, Massachusetts, (this school was long a principal feeder of Harvard University) and the parish took and still bears his name, the Byfield Parish, covering the greater part of the towns of Newbury, Georgetown and Rowley. I was privileged to attend a Sabbath service in the church there last year, and found it in every particular a typical development of the ancient New England Puritan Meeting, and an honor to one, who, though he did not admire the religious polity of "Antient Rehoboth" or Rhode Island, was yet one of God's noblemen. All honor then to Nathaniel Byfield, the founder of Bristol.

As to the disputed boundaries between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, which grew out of these religious piques and prejudices, I may be pardoned if I trespass upon your time to speak of them.

Plymouth Colony deriving its right of domain from the British Government, claimed jurisdiction over all lands between Cape Cod and Narragansett Bays as theirs by charter grant, while Connecticut from the same British source was granted all lands south of Massachusetts, and westward of the Narragansett. These claims left only the islands in Narragansett Bay and a small section (not much larger than ancient Rehoboth) between the Pawtucket and the Pawtuxet rivers at the head of the bay uncovered. Roger Williams with his friends occupied this latter tract in 1636, and called their homes the Prov-

idence Plantations. Clarke, Coddington and others settled upon the bay islands in 1638 and called themselves Rhode Islanders.

Now the staunch religious polity which environed these two little settlements, was of the same fellowship, which under Cromwell in 1649 had beheaded Charles I. and established the "Commonwealth" which titular government ("Commonwealth") was adopted and is still retained by Massachusetts. Now so it was that when Charles II. came back to occupy the throne of his fathers, although for the sake of his kingdom he had promised to forgive his adversaries (with a few exceptions) he evidently did not forget them, and when Williams who had been exiled from Salem, and Clarke, were sent over to England in Rhode Island interests, they met a personal friend in Sir Henry Vane (who as before stated had been ostracised from Massachusetts in 1636, but, who was now in England, and a power at Court) and through him they got the willing ear of Charles II. who gave them for their Colonies of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, the most liberal charter of all the royal grants, and upon points of boundary, provided that the mouth of the Pawcatuck River should be Connecticut's Narragansett limit eastward, hence all that large part of Rhode Island between the Pawcatuck and the Pawtuxet Rivers was long colloquially known as the King's Province, having been practically the gift of the King.

By the same charter strangely indefinite boundaries were named as Rhode Island's north-easterly limits, so indefinite indeed that the late Rufus Choate once characterized them as, "as untraceable as Samson's foxes with fire-brands at their tails." If fairly followed these bounds would have left "Antient Reho-

both" with Dighton, Freetown and Fall River almost wholly to Rhode Island ; possibly it was the King's intent, (or more probably, Vane's intent) so to do, as a sort of left-handed compliment or sinister reminder to the more Puritan Colonies, which had tabooed him. Be this as it may, these charter bounds were so manifestly in violation of the earlier Plymouth grant, that that colony stoutly resisted them, with the support and aid of Massachusetts, for more than eighty years. But the Kingly prerogative was popular in England and the people of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations steadfastly leaned upon it, until the Royal Commissioners as stated in 1746-7 ran the compromise line, dividing the debatable ground between them.

Rhode Island small as she is to-day, is thus seen to have been much smaller in her beginnings, and may fairly be said to have been wrenched out from between Connecticut and Massachusetts, providentially, in connection with "Antient Rehoboth" for the purpose of establishing Christian freedom in America, and like a diamond between an upper and nether mill-stone, she has impressed her character upon her surroundings, and brightened with the grind.

Rhode Island is indeed a small State to-day, though if measured by population, productive industry, wealth and intelligence she is by no means the least in the Union, but small as she is, she was that particular State of the old thirteen which had the moral courage and strength of will, alone, to stubbornly stand out single handed, and refuse to ratify the Federal Constitution, or enter the Union, mainly because her cherished principle of religious liberty had not been guaranteed in that compact, nor



would she, nor did she ratify the Constitution or enter the Union until the amendment, now known as "Article I. of Amendments," prohibiting Congress from establishing any particular church or religion by law, and guaranteeing free toleration to all, had been by Congress duly propounded and its adoption practically assured, then Rhode Island ratified and entered, the thus, and by her made consolidate national Union, with the dogma of religious liberty, (the sheet anchor of the little State, to which our "Antient Rehoboth" had been the stepping-stone,) the law of the Nation and the hope of mankind. For all of which under God's Providence (magnifying the work of the humble) our ancestors of this town (with Rhode Island) are entitled to reverential thanks.

I have no time, nor if I had would it be proper for me to continue this discussion. I have already trespassed too long. "Antient Rehoboth" is a rich field for study, and her sons and daughters whether here or in sister towns may well be proud of their ancestors' record, and the blood in their veins. Here for full two and a half centuries our fathers of all faiths have lived together in peace and harmony, and thanks to their *Civil Law* and Christian righteousness, no act of ecclesiastical diabolism, bigotry, perfidy or infamy stains their escutcheons.

But kinsfolk of mine, allow me a few words of our own more immediate surroundings and belongings in our Rehoboth of the present.

Here within the confines of the present town, our fathers came and dispossessed a race, living in primeval simplicity and dependent almost wholly upon Nature's bounty. Here within Rehoboth's dark woods the last and

best great chief of the Wamponoags (Philip's counselor) Annawan, bowed himself to the cruelties of fate, a captive in the land of his fathers, was taken hence by aliens to his race and betrayed to his death, a victim to the civilized barbarism of his times, and his great "unhewn rock" rifted and broken, "here within our borders" fitly perpetuates his fame. Here upon these hillsides and along these valleys our fathers for more than two centuries have planted corn in springtime with hope, and harvested in autumn with thanksgiving.

Here upon the hearthstones of these quiet country homes, our mothers through ten generations have kept their household fires sending up perpetual incense to Heaven, in gratitude for benedictions received, and for us who have wandered, our fathers' thresholds have spanned ever open doors, and mothers' fire-lights glowed warm welcomes to our return.

Let us be just too, to the soil once tilled by our sires even though to our sorrow we now view fields of historic industry abandoned, aye, the surface of our town is written all over with ruined stone fence walls, eloquent in their silence of the prosperity and industry of other days, and protesting as earnestly as written language can protest against the neglect of their whilom enclosures.

The wild woods in many places are creeping over pasture lands and meadow ground, fallow field and orchard lots, and even crowding upon the carriage way along the roadsides. Here where once all trades and handicrafts found place, no echo now reverberates the voice of many once busy industries. The hum of spindles and cackle of looms once resounding the employ of thrifty youth and adult age of both sexes, are hushed in the valleys, the waters

of our streams once turned to toil, now run idly to the sea, and the merry voices of the workers are silent upon the hills. The banks of the river, southward, once at nightfall in spring-time, wont to reverberate the jocund merriment of fishers, who came from all the country round to cast their nets—alike in hope and sport—are silent now, and even the waters have been despoiled of those abundant finney stores, which came annually to bless the tables of the homes of this town, in our earlier days. Here within my own recollections close upon our southern border the shipyard of Mason Barney (the honored grand sire of our orator) to which Rehoboth's timber principally contributed, used to launch two ships each season, the building of which gave employ to scores of men, the echoes of whose labors made the air for miles around vocal with the music of mallets, the ringing of hammers, the rasp of the saw and thud of the maul, but all this too has passed away, the old Esquire whom everyone knew and respected, after a long life of great enterprise and untoward vicissitudes, has gone to his fathers, his employees, axe-men and adz-men, tree-nailers and caulkers, top-sawyers and pit-men are mouldering with the dust of their toils, as silent as the echoes of their industry and the ships they built, which once sailed every sea the wide world round, have been swept from the face of the ocean, leaving no vestige to tell the story of their voyaging, save perchance, here and there some wreck bleaching on the sands of a distant shore. So too, the brave men of Rehoboth who once so proudly sailed them, are fast fading from sight, leaving naught but the traditions of their brave exploits and bold enterprise as a heritage to the town.

And of the old ship-yard itself there is nothing left to mark the spot, as it was, save only the deserted

wharf, the bridge and the river slumbering in the bosom of green meadows and woodlands. Yes, the river's refluxing tides still ebb and flow, their stinted meets and bounds as of old; and its shimmering surface still gleams and glistens in the summer sunlight, or wave toss at eventide, dances, frolics and wantons to the kiss of the fragrant in-coming south-sea winds, as in days that are gone. Truly "men may come and men may go" but tides and winds abide.

Now what, pray tell me what, are the lessons of these transitions? There is, there can be but one answer. They are the results of an evolution of depopulation, coupled with the developments of mechanical invention, to which Rehoboth by reason of her local situation has been unfavorably subjected. Fixed as she is midway between the great cities of Providence and Pawtucket upon the west, and Taunton and Fall River upon the east, each within an easy half hour drive of her borders, with busy Boston and wealthy Newport not far distant upon the north and south respectively, each and all great maelstroms of humanity, standing with ever outstretched arms beckoning, inviting, soliciting and beguiling the young manhood and womanhood of this town to come to their all-consuming embraces, "'Tis true, and pity 'tis, 'tis true," too many have listened to the song of the sirens for their own good, or the good of their heritage in this town.

But let the good old town and her citizens take courage from this time forth, brighter days are uprising for Rehoboth, even now, the horizon is all astreak with the daybreak of a better morrow. By evolution Rehoboth lost, by evolution she shall recover. City life is artificial, and unsatisfactory, in its struggles a few succeed but the multitude go down, and were the city populations not contin-

ually recruited with fresh country blood, they would die out as fires for want of fuel. The denizens of cities are now realizing this, and all who can, are seeking country homes with hope to perpetuate a posterity who may enjoy the fortunes they have accumulated. More than this the people of the country are realizing their advantages and turning their attention to their own more immediate opportunities, even now the current evolution is progressing. Wherever we look about this town to-day we see new homes building, each better than the old, with new barns of fourfold capacity of those which served our fathers, all of which testifies that the climate of Rehoboth is wholesome, and the soil of her fields yet fertile, and only waiting the renewed upturn of the ploughshare and a kiss by the sun, to smile again with harvests as of old.

With nature's resources abundant to support fivefold her present population, with broadening developments yet to come to her through better roads and the possibilities of electric transportation, with all that it implies, Rehoboth from her commanding position here midst the cities may become not only their market garden, but a garden of New England residential homes. In that day the cities upon her borders may beckon and solicit Rehoboth's sons and daughters, but they will beckon and solicit in vain.

A few words more and I am done. Within the last century the fields of mechanical invention and philosophic discovery have been explored beyond the seeming probability of like further developments. With steam to speed our feet, and the lightnings our messenger, with great iron liviathans bridging the ocean and linking continents and islands, shore to shore, with wires surcharged with intelligence girding the earth, and breathing responsive to

the life of its remotest corners, it would seem as if little more could be looked for along like natural lines in progressive physics, although undoubtedly much yet remains to be developed; hence future inquiries will needs be directed to those mental realms, which even in the light of what we think civilization are yet darkly clouded.

He would be a bold man who should affect to forecast the future, or presume to paint conditions which may here obtain when Rehoboth shall celebrate her next quadra-millennial. I shall not attempt it, but let us hope that the progress of the future may out-do that of the past, as we have many reasons to think it will. I believe we are on the verge of greater intellectual changes and evolutions than the past has shown, and if perchance on that next centennial day, aught of us or of our conditions is remembered and studied, the contrasts developed will be almost immeasurable, and the darkness of even our day and civilization will seem to our posterity surprising, in the light of their then better knowledge, conditions and wisdom.

It was declared of old by Him who knew wherof He affirmed, "that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" I have faith in the promise, I know the exegesis with which the problem is clerically discussed, but choose to take a broader view. What is the seed of woman, but woman's work and influence upon our race, and now after centuries of waiting, the time seems nearing when by the uplifting power of education and better opportunities, woman shall take her place as the vindicator of humanity, an arbiter whose power the lords of the race must respect. Already she is the teacher of the coming generation of manhood and womanhood, as never before,



and her influence with them through these opportunities is unbounded.

Think you, that when another quadra-millennial shall have rolled its circling centuries round for this ancient town, that God-fearing, man-loving woman, enfranchised and cultivated, refined and powerful, will consent to, or tolerate in her consort sex, the barbarisms she to-day suffers him to commit. I tell you nay, nor will the educated and enfranchised woman of the coming centuries countenance in man the vices she instinctively abhors in woman, again I tell you nay, but by that power which to woman has been given, to make of man what she will, or compel him to live an outcast forever, she will be able to crush out the evil and develop the good in her fellow being, as the skilled gardener destroys weeds, that corn may grow. Thus woman casting her seed, by her work, influence and opportunity, will, little by little as the years go by, lift both herself and her fellow man up to higher levels and better conditions than obtain today, or than our ancestors ever dreamed of, and so onward progressing, until she becomes the herald she was intended to be, of "Peace on earth, good will to men." Then indeed the seed of the woman shall have bruised the serpent's head, as has been promised.

The churches and people of this ancient town have chosen well in these latter years to commemorate the virtues of their sires by annual festivals in endurance. as contrasted with a festival, the most solid of all architectural monuments fail to compare, the cities of Egypt, built of stone, substantial and once thronged with civilized life, are now lost in the dust with their builders the pyramids crumble with decay, and no man can tell their story, the obelisks are obliterate, the sphinxes silent as the ledges from which they were hewn. But the feast



of the Passover, ordained to commemorate the deliverance of the first born of Israel, is yet celebrated wherever an intelligent congregation of Hebrews sojourn, and such congregation do so sojourn in every civilized city the wide world round, as witnesses of God's goodness to man. So too, the monuments and temples of ancient Greece and Rome, temples only within the shadows of which, Peter and Paul were permitted to proclaim the mission and life of the Redeemer, all now lie low in ruins and forgetfulness, but the feast of the Last Supper instituted to commemorate the passion and resurrection of Him, whom Peter and Paul so humbly preached, is now celebrated by every enlightened nationality of the globe. So too, let us commemorate this ancient town and the virtues of our sires by festival. What though in our day she may have been an humble town, and we her children an humble people, what though our walks in life may have been allotted to us along the valleys, and our town never have stalked strident along the hilltops of modern prosperity and renown, as some of her sister towns have done? we love her! nonetheless, we love her! the milk and corn of her herds and breasted hillsides nourished us in youth, the lint and wool of her fields and flocks clothed, aye, literally clothed, her roof-trees sheltered and her fire-sides warmed, and more than all else, the dust of those who were nearer and dearer to us than all others lies buried in her soil, then perish the heart, forever perish the heart that shall forget to honor this, the town of his father's hope and toils, or fail to speak his mother's praises in the land.

Then friends, let us and our posterity as we would honor God, our parents and ourselves, year by year in autumn come up to this ancient town, in the season of the roasting ears, and as to-day, together eat the harvest home.

Hon. Edwin C. Pierce, of Providence, R. I.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

The lateness of the hour admonishes me that I must detain you only a few minutes, although on an occasion so inspiring, and in a company like this, where all are related by the ties of common tradition, and very many by kinship of blood, not so remote that it cannot be traced, pregnant thoughts would easily frame themselves into words upon the lips of even the most unaccustomed speaker.

I come to this spot to-day out of filial loyalty to the memory of Samuel Newman, the founder, of whom I am a lineal descendant on my mother's side, in the seventh generation. I am equally proud to claim descent, like your honored chairman, from that Captain Michael Pierce, of Scituate, who with his band of New England Spartans, among whom were citizens of Rehoboth, died on the bed of honor a few miles from here, in defence of all the settlements in the Old Colony.

The early settlers of New England were distinguished, in an eminent degree, by courage, both moral and physical, and by perseverance. They had for conscience sake separated themselves from an established church, some of their ministers, like Newman, giving up comfortable livings in that church.

They had left their native land and crossed a stormy ocean, and had made their homes in a wilderness. They were surrounded by forests peopled by barbarians upon

whose peaceful disposition they could never reckon, and who attempted their destruction.

I need not recount to you, their descendants, the story of the fortitude and perseverance of those ancestors of ours.

From the New Englanders of to-day are demanded also heroic qualities, although their foes and their trials are of a different sort from those of their fathers.

The dangers and the problems of political corruption, of intemperance, of the just acquisition and distribution of wealth, the unifying in one harmonious citizenship of immigrants of various nationality and creed, these it is that confront the New Englanders of to-day.

Let them face these dangers and these problems not only with courage and perseverance, but with confidence. As the perils of the wilderness did not daunt our fathers, let their children face the perils of civilization with unquailing hearts.

Let them cherish their fathers' faith in God and have faith in their own great destiny.

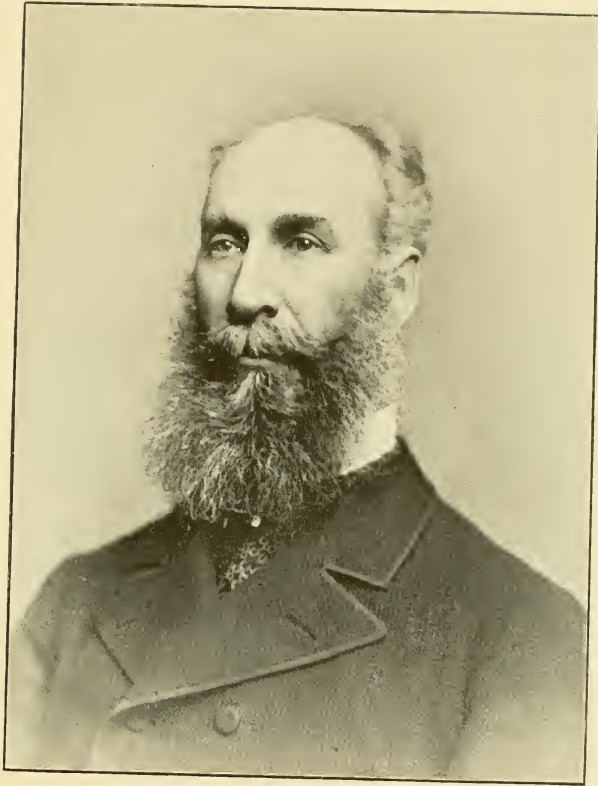
There is no occasion for New Englanders to lose confidence in themselves, or doubt the future success of their institutions or their enterprises.

The cities which crown the hill-tops of New England, while they present problems, are on the whole in wholesome and hopeful condition. They are destined to be cities of the light.

250th Anniversary

POEM ==





THOMAS W. BICKNELL.





## An Original Poem

BY THOMAS W. BICKNELL.

## EARLY PILGRIMS.

We meet where ancient altar fires  
Were kindled by ancestral sires,  
And grateful homage here we pay  
To worthies of an earlier day.

Our Mecca this, a sacred shrine,  
Made holy by the Face Divine ;  
Our Salem, where with joyful lays  
The tribes once met for prayer and praise.

'Twas Israel's wont, at Zion's seat,  
The story and the song repeat  
Of captive days, of grand release  
From Pharaoh's bonds to Canaan's peace.

They sang again sweet Miriam's strains  
That echoed over Goshen's plains;  
As horse and rider filled the sea.  
"Jehovah triumphed gloriously."

At Marah's springs they drank anew,  
Till bitter waters sweeter grew ;  
'Neath Elim's palms they slaked their thirst  
And gained new strength by days of rest.

Across the desert sands they stray,—  
Their guide the pillared cloud by day ;  
In darksome night, the stars their tent,  
O'eraching God's high firmament.

Ere yet the Promised Land they spy,  
For Egypt's leeks and corn they cry ;  
E'en Joshua's speech of fruitful vines  
And corn and wine are empty signs.

But on they press at Moses' word,  
And reach the Sacred Mount of God,  
Where blessed anew with Law and Love,  
They pledge their faith in Heaven above.

Through Moab's land, past Nebo's cave  
Where Israel's leader found his grave;  
His strength still new, his vision bright,  
He rested there 'neath Heaven's sweet light,

"On Jordan's stormy banks they stand,"  
And view their Canaan, promised Land,  
Its waters feel their Master's wand  
And swift obey His great command.

These earlier Pilgrims find their home,  
Where God has made them plenteous room;  
The rocks yield honey, milk their kine,  
They seek His precepts all divine.

To the high theme of Pilgrim days,  
In modern lands, our thoughts we raise,  
And trace the path the fathers trod,  
Who lived and walked and died with God.

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### FROM OLD TO NEW.

Stout of heart and strong of hand,  
Were the men who journeyed from old England,  
Who broke the chains of a despot king,  
And with freemen's shouts made the welkin ring.

"Charles is a tyrant," they boldly said,  
And under the banners of Cromwell led,  
These sires of ours won their spurs of yore,  
On Naseby's fields and at Marston Moore.

The King of Kings was their leader then ;  
They feared no foes of the sons of men,  
But forth to battle and death they went,  
As unto some holy sacrament.

Some called them Roundheads as in scorn ;  
Others named them Puritans and low born.  
Both they confessed and proudly chose  
To die with these than to reign with those,

A stern resolve fired these noble men,  
Their faith in God well served them then ;  
"We had rather brave the new world's fears,  
Than to dwell on a soil sown with bitter tears.

This land of our birth is now desolate,  
The Church is corrupt and worse the State.  
We will not bow to an earthly crown  
That tramples the laws of God's kingdom down.

Across the seas in the Golden West,  
Lies a newer land where the soul may rest.  
Where the foot of the tyrant has never trod,  
And with freedom of faith we may worship God."

The Mayflower brought of the choicest stock;  
They planted their feet on Plymouth Rock.  
The seed of three realms was the freight they brought  
In that little ship, men counted naught.

I see her prow as it parts the waves  
To the land of the free from a land of slaves ;  
A pillar of cloud was their guide by day,—  
The lamp of Hope led their nightly way.

How strange was the sight that met the view  
Of these pioneers to a land so new ;  
The shores and the woods like the waves were wild,  
For Nature alone on these scenes had smiled.

'Twas God's dear welcome alone they sought,  
As into this wilderness they brought  
Their wives and children and household stuff ;  
With the Church and the School they were rich enough.

But list to the sound that floats on the air;  
Methinks it's the chorus of praise and prayer  
That rises from hearts in that cabin lone,  
And mingles and swells at God's high throne.

This promised land they hold in trust,  
To Heaven they pledge allegiance first ;  
Then with their faith in fellow man,  
They knew not race nor creed nor clan.

These tenets bold the Pilgrims gave,  
 As principles the world to save.  
 The winds took up the bold refrain,  
 And swept them westward o'er the main,—

Till o'er the land Columbus saved  
 And seized from out the western wave,  
 One song shall fill all souls with praise,  
 And crown earth's latest, sweetest days, .  
 "The brotherhood of man maintain,  
 The Fatherhood of God proclaim."

## ON THE MARCH.

Out of the East, ere the sunrise, in the dawn of colonial story,  
 While the red streaks of the morning were lighting the plains and the forests,  
 Gathered the neighbors at Weymouth to speak their good-byes at the fording.  
 Late yester-night it was ordered the march should begin on the morrow.  
 Prayers had been offered at hearthstones and around the old Weymouth pulpit.  
 Newman, the elder, their leader, was to be of the new flock their shepherd,  
 To lead to the pastures of Seekonk, beside the still waters of Blackstone.  
 Trusty, the Indian guide, who knew the long trail through the forests,  
 Knew where the camps should be made and the Titicut's stream could be forded,  
 Knew where the alewives swarmed and the nuts had been stored by the squirrels,  
 Knew where the goose laid its eggs, and the hedgehogs fashioned their burrows;  
 Knapsacks strapped to their backs, and their horses well laden with baggage,  
 Clothing from over the seas, and stores from old Wessagussett;  
 Men astride English-bred horses, and women on pillions behind them,  
 Babies on their arms or their backs, and barefooted children as footmen.  
 Narrow the trail through the woods that leads to the Western horizon,  
 Where these first pilgrims shall rest, on the march to the farther Pacific.  
 Green and mossy the carpet that is spread o'er the floor of great Braintree;  
 Sweet are the songs of the Robins, and the redwing is joyous with music;  
 The catkins are green on the willows, and brilliant the blush of the maple;  
 The mayflowers are modest as maidens, and the cowslips drink gold from the  
 brooklets.

Onward they make their way, with serious mood, yet glad-hearted,  
 Looking with hope for the day when their future new home should be sighted  
 Near to the land of Mosshassuck, on the borders of blue Narragansett,  
 Where Williams, the exile from Salem, had made an asylum for freemen.  
 Early their first camp they made, in sight of the blue Massachusetts,

Bedded beneath the pines near the waters of the white-pebbled Mashpaug,  
 Early next day on the trail they meet with the Chief Metacomet,  
 Sagamore now of the tribe that rules over waved-washed Sowamset.  
 Welcome he gives to the band, which holds in its girdle the legend  
 Written by Massasoit, their deed to the broad Wannamoisset.  
 Royal the Puritan pageant, the redface now leads the procession,  
 Winding across the plains till Titicut's waters are forded.  
 The camp is set for the night with Indian warriors for sentries,  
 Near the great hill on the south, where later the beacons were lighted.  
 Joy fills the heart of the people, for well they know on the morrow  
 They will feast on the bivalves of Seekonk and drink from the waters of Black-  
 stone.

On the third day ere the nightfall, they reach this land of their purchase.  
 Here Samuel Newman, the elder, now well within his possessions,  
 Gratefully pours out his soul in a prayer of deepest devotion,  
 Voicing the hearts of his church in the wilderness here to be planted,  
 Sacredly sets up his standards and christens this new land Rehoboth.  
 "For," said the Puritan leader, "This is the land full of promise.  
 Here hath the Lord led his flock to the pastures and waters of plenty,  
 Its name shall henceforth be Rehoboth, for here there is room for our planting,  
 Mother of towns shall she be and of churches so true and so faithful,  
 Blest of the Lord in the life which here on these plains we have planted."

## THE CHURCH AND HOME IN THE WILDERNESS.

Across the years and lives of men,  
 The Church and home have welcome been;  
 Each in its sphere a power for good—  
 A power more felt than understood.

Each near the other found its place,  
 The Home for life ; the Church for grace.  
 Like sentries firm their watch towers stand  
 To guard the treasures of the land.

The earliest thought of Newman's flock  
 Was planted first on Plymouth Rock;  
 But seed like this finds ready root  
 In soils that tempt no other fruit.

At Providence, across the tide,  
Brave Williams and his church abide.  
There exile saints and sinners meet  
At freedom's common mercy seat.

At Study Hill, Blackstone's retreat,  
The hermit settler thinks it meet  
To flee the priestly lord of men ;  
And tyrant more—the lord-brethren.

On Seekonk's plains, in sweet accord,  
With these true followers of the Lord,  
Samuel, the seer, of English blood,  
Reveres the oracles of God.

He plants the church on corner stone,  
Where priest and prophet meet in one.  
He rears the humble Bethel roof  
On soil that thirsts for Heaven's own truth.

The sacred desk he weekly fills,  
And from his lips Heaven's dew distills ;  
The hour glass tests the sermons's length;  
Its *doctrines* try men's faith and strength.

Two preachments on each Sabbath day,  
A week-day lecture, grave, not gay—  
Discourses suited to an hour  
When men must hew their way to power.

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### NEWMAN AND HIS FLOCK.

Teacher and pastor was our Newman, too,  
His hands some task were always near to do.  
The sick had healing, comfort the distressed,  
The dying solace and the weary rest.

To feed his flock the pastor must be fed,  
Himself must lead to pastures rich with bread,  
God's word to him was daily manna blest,  
*Newman's Concordance* tells the story best.

With axe or hammer equal was his skill,  
As with the faithful but relentless quill.  
He wrought by day ; no midnight oil he burned,  
Because forsooth pine knots were all he earned.

His salary was fifty pounds a year ;  
His work was broad, yet many called it dear.  
That ancient flock had need of various care  
A modern pastor ne'er would try or share.

He led the sheep by pastures fair and large,  
The lambs he nurtured as a shepherd's charge.  
The Church was foremost, yet in things of State,  
He oft was called the town to moderate.

Physician, too, he knew the art and skill  
To practice with the knife or murderous pill.  
A Judge he was, in suits not always civil,  
The case went hard that savored of the devil.

The meeting house, quite like the pastor, too,  
Had uses for all times and seasons new.  
Its high-backed pews concealed the deacon's nod,  
Who bowed to *Somnus* while he worshipped God.

The sounding board high o'er the pulpit tower,  
Resounded with the preacher's vocal power,  
While on town meeting days the county squire,  
Set all the town ablaze, with lungs on fire.

The galleries above were filled with youth  
Who went to meeting *more for fun* than truth ;  
The tithing man, though patient as a rule,  
Found here a task as hard as keeping school.

The Church and State united here in one ;  
The pulpit was the forum and the throne.  
All human wrongs were righted at this court ;  
They prayed and quarreled when they came to vote.

The deacon's hat crown was the voter's box,  
Where every freeman cast his written prox.  
The kangaroo and ballot were unknown,  
The seeds of ballot stuffing were not sown.



'Tis well to call it consecrated ground,  
Where men and deeds of primal stock are found,  
Old Seekonk's plains, though waste as a Sahara,  
Are brilliant yet as diamond-decked tiara.

For here the Church has stood the centuries' shock,  
And round her hearthstones many a loyal flock  
Has gathered since the days of "forty-three,"  
To make the Church and State both strong and free.

Newman, the scholar, was their leader then,  
A true-born son of God and king of men.  
Across these fields his active pathway lay,  
"Allured to brighter worlds and led the way."

Thrice blessed he who saw that early day,  
Before these times when saints hunt heresy :  
Who made his doctrines square and orthodox,  
Because forsooth, there was no other dox.

'Twas Father Newman to the elder men,  
And Parson Newman to the younger clan.  
He taught true faith, great hope and charity,  
Untrammelled by the weight of a D. D.

A fiery chariot like Elijah's train,  
As carrier for this sacred servant came .  
"Angels your office do," his latest word,  
And mounted heavenward, toward the throne of God."

Time fails to tell of grand, heroic souls,  
And women, too, bright stars on history's rolls;  
Who lived and labored, loved and journeyed on,  
From life's bright morning till its setting sun.

Who set the standards of our later times  
Of honest service and of well-earned dimes :  
Who sought not honors nor earth's poor reward.  
But righteous living, richest gift of God.

Around us are their sons who run the town :  
Their names are Peck and Allen, Hunt and Brown,  
Walker and Martin, Carpenter and Bliss,  
Cooper and Holmes, and lots of names like this.

Palmer, whose name our *shadowy* river bears ;  
 Devill, who left a multitude of heirs ;  
 Wheaton and Ingram, Miller, Ide and Peck.  
 With Bowen, Bucklyn, Payne, near Wachemoquit Neck.

John Brown, the statesman, born a gentleman,  
 Who served his God, by serving common men ;  
 Lover of freedom, both in Church and State,  
 A noble man, a faithful magistrate.

Blanding and Bosworth, Daggett, Smith and Bullock ;  
 Perry and Fuller, Mason, Grant and Woodcock ;  
 Good men and true, their wives and children all  
 In truth, as good as any since the Fall.

Brave Thomas Willett, Captain of the State,  
 Standish's successor, with fame as great,  
 Who laurels won at old Manhattan's town,  
 And at Rehoboth's feet did lay them down.

Peace to their ashes, resting 'neath the sod  
 Of yonder graveyard ; souls, they rest in God.  
 Living, they come to cheer our burdened way,  
 And lift our souls to Heaven's eternal day.

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## THE FIRST BAPTISM OF BLOOD AND FIRE.

The wilderness now has been vanquished,  
 The wild brier was fragrant in June,  
 The cornfields were bright for the harvest,  
 And the farmers were resting at noon.

When lo, on the southern horizon,  
 A storm cloud quick threatens the land.  
 'Tis charged with the lightning of vengeance,  
 From the hearts of a barbarous band.

From the heights of his throne, Metacomet  
 Has marshalled his forces for war ;  
 Their tomahawks sharp for the conflict,  
 The torch and the knife gleam afar.

The camp fires are kindled on Montaup,  
 And over the Titicut shines  
 The beacon which rouses the red man,—  
 Its omen the white man divines.

Across the blue Narragansett  
Canonchet his warriors has sent ;  
Their cheeks are now fresh with the war paint,  
The blood of the Pilgrims they scent.

The roses are blooming at Seekonk,  
Their red is the omen of blood ;  
The moon was eclipsed in the evening.  
Was this a strange message from God ?

A runner has come from old Swanzey,  
The warning to Newman he brings ;  
At midnight the war dance was lighted,  
To-day on the war-path they spring.

The settlers on broad Kickemuit,  
Have deserted their homes for the fray  
To strengthen the guard at Myles' fortress  
And hold the red warriors at bay.

The order has come from New Plymouth,  
Proclaiming a fast o'er the land.  
"To avert God's displeasure against us,  
The pestilence stay by his hand."

"Jehovah, the pilgrims' defender,  
Who hast saved from the storm and the flood,  
To thy care we now meekly surrender ;—  
Oh, stay the sharp blows of thy rod."

"Our sins we most humbly confess them ;  
Like crimson our hearts are deep stained ;  
We merit the direst destruction,  
But save us in Jesus' great name."

"And now from your homes," cries the captain,  
"To the fort your old bell muzzles bring,  
There are powder and bullets in plenty ;  
Round the ears of the redskins they'll sing."

" 'Tis true we're not fond of such music,  
But we are not setting the tune.  
The red man may do some tall dancing  
Around the red roses of June."

Then Newman, the younger, with mettle  
As true and as brave as his sire's,  
Takes command of his forces for battle ;  
Their courage in danger inspires.

The women and children safe gathered  
Within the broad "Ring of the Town,"  
The parson and flock hunt for redmen—  
A dozen or more they shoot down.

The battles rage fiercely around them,  
These plains were well crimsoned with blood,  
Where Pierce, with a valor so splendid,  
Fell facing Pawtucket's swift flood.

The warwhoop sounds out the alarum,  
The Indians cover the plains,  
They stealthily hide in the thicket,  
While the people the garrison gain.

The story is told that one yeoman—  
A Celt and the first in this land—  
Fled not from the face of the redman,  
But died with his Bible in hand.

Oh, sad was that dark night of terror  
When the torch swept this peaceable town !  
It seemed like the fires of dark judgements,  
As rain from the heavens coming down.

'Twas Nero, the tyrant, who sported,  
When Rome from her proud station fell,  
'Twas Philip of Montaup who revelled,  
While the fires raged, a pitiless hell.

Here Annawan, bravest of chieftans,  
Sought refuge in yon rocky wood,  
Whom Church from his eagle-eyed eyrie  
Seized and slew with small tumult and blood.

The soil of yon Common is sacred,  
Its ashes are mingled with blood ;  
The red and the white fell together—  
Both await the great judgement of God.

The roses are blooming at Seekonk,  
The sweetbrier is fragrant in June,  
War sleeps at the roots of the daisies,  
Sweet Peace yields her grateful perfume.

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### FREEDOM OF CHURCH AND STATE.

From scenes like these of earliest times,  
My Muse, turn thou away,  
And sing of happier hours and deeds,  
Of men of later day.

When Freedom, child of Western birth,  
Approached its natal hour ;  
And stern Oppression fought to hold  
Her strong but waning power,

Nature, stern savage, first was met.  
The fight is not yet o'er :  
From cape to gulf the contest's on,  
From ocean's shore to shore.

Our fathers met a sterner foe  
In hostile sons of men ;  
The Indian wars left many scars  
And tried their courage then.

United 'neath one common flag—  
The banner of the free—  
They marched along life's broad highway  
To grander liberty.

Each cycle as it swept around  
Unrolled a fresh-born hour;  
The century aloe bloomed anew  
With more luxuriant flower.

The priest and people, equals then  
By common heritage,  
And equal sacrifice for peace,  
Proclaimed the coming age.

The watchmen on this Zion's walls  
Studied the starry night,  
And as Heaven's curtains rolled away  
Announced the rising light.

The happier home, the freer school,  
Were streaks of morning's dawn,  
But brighter yet was manhood's growth  
In which our State was born,

The church fulfilled her mission high  
And led toward kindlier life ;  
She showed men how to live in love,  
To shun all earthly strife,

Except as truth should need defense—  
Her breastwork then was men  
Who stood at Concord's stony bridge  
Or fell at Lexington.

The pulpit sounded forth, "To arms !"'  
The pews the call obey ;  
The courage born of Christian faith  
Won all the victory.

With men of mother race there came  
The fratricidal strife ;  
The sons of Seekonk bravely stood  
To save the nation's life.

The star that led their pilgrim sires  
Across the western wave,  
Then reached its zenith ; o'er the world  
Its light to millions gave,

Till in these latest days we dwell  
On Pisgah's lofty stand,  
And view bright Canaan yet afar—  
Our children's promised land.

How glad the promise of the hour,—  
Around us all is peace.  
Our homes are beauteous heavens below—  
We ask no swift release,

Our neighbor dwells beyond the hills  
And o'er the stormy seas ;  
We know no color, creed nor clan—  
Except the far Chinese.

Our chariots ride on wings of wind  
Across the land and main ;  
We chase the lightning in our speech ;  
It lights our flying train.

We talk with men in far Cathay,  
And dine in our New York,  
We steam to London in four days,  
And supper take in Cork.

Our Uncle Sam he squints his eye  
Across our northern border,  
In half a jiffy stout John Bull  
Brands him as a marauder.

"The Grand Old Man" in Parliament  
Declares for good home rule,  
And Cleveland echoes back "Amen,"  
Before his words are cool.

A western town of fifty years  
Invites all to Chicago ;  
The warships of the world unite  
To say "We'll not to war go."

Our women vote, orate and pray,  
And cook the best of dinners ;  
They drive seven devils out of men  
And watch for bigger sinners.

What's still to come no seer can say,  
No poet yet divine,  
One thing is true, we're moving on  
Along the appointed line.

From England old to England new—  
Columbia newer still,  
From Newman of the elder stock,  
Through Greenwood, Hyde and Hill.

The veteran Barney, in whose years  
This church had strength and peace,  
Evans and Johnson, Woodworth, too,  
And Ferris last, not least.



The church is freer than of yore,  
Her creeds are lighter grown,  
The Christ has entered human life  
To fill it with his own.

The State now stands for freedom large,  
In thought and action one ;  
The man of wealth and man of work  
Are equal 'neath our sun.

To-day, for blessings large and full,  
We owe to English stock,  
We grateful raise our voice of praise  
On this our Plymouth Rock.

The mother town salutes her own,—  
Her children strong and true,  
In coming time, with faith sublime,  
She'll conquests gain with you.

All honor to those noble sires,  
Who planted on these plains,  
The seeds of virtue, labor, truth,  
Whose fruitage rich remains.

May He who leads to pastures rich,  
Our guide and guardian be,  
Till in the west we sink to rest  
Beyond life's golden sea.

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Read at the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the planting  
of the Newman Congregational Church and of the founding of the  
town of Rehoboth, June 7, 1893.





GEORGE N. GOFF.



[It is proper to add to the published account of the proceedings at the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of Rehoboth, brief biographical notes of the Committee who served the Antiquarian Society and the town in the successful undertaking, and of two or three persons intimately connected with the history of the town and the celebration.]

### Darius Goff.

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Among the distinguished manufacturers of New England of the last half century, as a pioneer in the establishment of new and important manufacturing industries. Darius Goff, of Pawtucket, R. I., was undoubtedly the foremost representative. Bred to the pursuit of textile manufacture, and gifted with mechanical insight and inventive talent, from the beginning to nearly the end of his long business career he labored to open untouched fields of industrial enterprise; and by reason of the un-failing success of his numerous undertakings, creating and permanently establishing industries of great national importance, his legacy to American manufactures is of immeasurable value, demanding full recognition in the annals of permanent history.

Darius Goff was born in the town of Rehoboth, Massachusetts, May 10, 1809, and he was the youngest son of Lieutenant Richard and Mehitabel (Bullock) Goff. He had four brothers and two sisters; names, Richard, Otis, Horatio, Patience, Nelson, and Mary B., his sister Mary being the only one of the children younger than he.

His ancestral line in the New World begins in the early settlement of the Old Colony, and comes down through the generations in honorable succession. Darius Goff's mother was the daughter of Hon. Stephen Bullock. His great-grandfather on the paternal branch, Richard

Goff, was one of the first settlers of the Old Colony, and his grandfather, Joseph Goff, was of Barrington, both in their day being men of influence, and held in high esteem. His father, Richard Goff, was a pioneer in wool manufacture, establishing at Rehoboth, in 1790, a fulling and cloth dressing mill, which he carried on with success until 1821, when mills of that character were generally supplanted by large factories, in which all the operations of manufacture were done by improved methods and machinery.

The boyhood days of Darius Goff were in part spent in the village school, where he obtained the rudiments of an English education, and in part in his father's mill, where he acquired a general knowledge of the business, attaining, however, a greater proficiency in the processes of coloring, as most of his work, and his especial interest, was in that department. After his labors at home were ended, he went to Fall River, and was employed for a time in the woolen mill of John and Jesse Eddy. In 1827 he engaged as clerk in a large grocery store in Providence: and he continued in that employment until 1833, when he returned to Rehoboth, and with his brother Nelson, equipped and put in operation the first mill in the country known to have been run successfully in the manufacture of cotton batting. Mr. Goff's development of this branch of manufacture, by the introduction of machinery and processes of his own conception and original application, and his other business undertakings from that time until 1861, is outlined in the history of the Union Wadding Company of Pawtucket, which was the grand culmination of his efforts and labors in that line of industrial progress.

In 1861, Mr. Goff conceived and put in execution another enterprise, compassing a field of equal if not greater importance—the manufacture of worsted braids in

this country, which had previously been purely experimental, and had utterly failed of successful establishment. Upon the foundation then laid by him after strenuous efforts, shared from the beginning by his son, Darius L. Goff, has been established the great worsted braid concern of D. Goff & Sons, whose products are known throughout the whole civilized world. Its history elsewhere given is practically the history of the inception, growth, and development of the worsted braid industry in the United States; and in it is briefly recorded the nature of the principal difficulties encountered and overcome to effect its permanent and prosperous establishment.

Another signal achievement of Mr. Goff was the founding of the mohair plush industry in America. Prior to 1882, the manufacture of this article for upholstery and other uses of a similar character had been mostly confined to France and Germany. The importation of this material had become considerable, and was annually increasing, and Mr. Goff was inspired with the desirability of its being made a home product, and with the belief that he could profitably undertake it in competition with the foreign manufactures. To carry out this purpose, in 1882, he sent a skilled mechanic to visit the principal plush manufactories of France and of Germany, to acquire a thorough knowledge of their methods and processes and to purchase the requisite machinery. But his agent utterly failed in accomplishing the object of his mission. The operations at the factories were carried on with the utmost secrecy; and by no strategy could the necessary machinery be obtained, hence Mr. Goff was thrown back entirely on his own resources of invention, and a resolute determination to achieve a success independent of foreign locks and keys. With characteristic energy he immedi-



ately instituted a series of experiments, which, although protracted to a period of five years, finally resulted in the construction of a loom, the products of which were fully equal in perfection and value to the best foreign manufactures.

The last manufacturing industry established under the auspices of Mr. Goff, was the Royal Weaving Company of Pawtucket, and it grew out of an incident which occurred about two years before his death. In looking over a building owned by him, rented to several tenants engaged in various pursuits, he found one of the rooms occupied by an English weaver, Mr. Joseph Ott, employing two hand looms in the manufacture of coat linings, using in their fabrication fine imported yarns. Mr. Ott had but recently arrived in this country, and as far as could be learned, he was the only producer of that class of goods in the United States. Mr. Goff at once discerned the value of this new industry and the feasibility of establishing it here on a permanent and paying basis. To that end he became interested with Mr. Ott, and with his personal assistance and substantial aid the above named company was organized. A factory was soon fitted up with suitable machinery and power, and the manufacture of these goods was successfully inaugurated. The factory of the Royal Weaving Company is at Central Falls; seventy-five looms are now in operation, and the fabrics produced are worsted, cotton, and silk.

To within a brief period of his death, Mr. Goff retained in a remarkable degree the full exercise of his mental faculties and physical activity. With unrelaxed interest he visited his mills, gave close attention to the work in hand, and the methods employed, and in an advisory way

he was to the last the means of effecting more or less salutary changes and improvements.

Mr. Goff died at his home in Pawtucket, R. I., April 14, 1891, closing a long career of great value to the industrial interests of the country, and of immeasurable usefulness in all departments of life which claimed his service, aid or sympathy. On his decease the City of Pawtucket, through her journals, societies and official boards made grateful acknowledgements of its indebtedness to him for his instrumentality in making it first among the textile manufacturing centres of the United States, relative to its population; and for his activity in the promotion of every undertaking for the advancement of its business, educational, social, and religious interests.

The National Association of Wool Manufacturers, of which he had long been an active member, at a meeting held in Boston, paid earnest tribute to him for his "Pre-eminent services in the diversification and extension of the wool manufacture, to his high character as a man, his large public spirit, his conscientious discharge of every obligation to society, and the earnest devotion to principle by which his life and actions were governed."

Holding in affectionate regard the place of his birth and its early associations, in 1884 Mr. Goff purchased and gave to the Town of Rehoboth, as a site for a Memorial Hall, the old homestead estate which had been in the family since 1714. The old Goff Inn, one of the noted hostelries of colonial days, still remained, and the spot occupied by it was chosen by him for the place of the Hall. Under his auspices, with liberal aid from the town people, a fine edifice was erected, containing school rooms, a lecture hall, a library, and an antiquarian room, in which

are interestingly exhibited the primitive hand implements of the early days, used in the textile arts. The building was dedicated as the Goff Memorial Hall, on May 10, 1886, the 77th anniversary of the birth of Mr. Goff, and the 240th anniversary of the delivery of the deeds of the old town by Massasoit to the English.

Mr. Goff was one of the original stockholders of the Pawtucket Gas Company, and for many years he was the sole surviving member of its first board of directors. He was a director in the Pawtucket Hair Cloth Company, from its organization; and he was also a director of the Franklin Savings Bank, of the First National Bank, and of the Pawtucket Street Railway Company. He was called to serve in the Town Council of Pawtucket, and in 1871 he was elected State Senator. From 1848, Mr. Goff was identified with the society and interests of the Pawtucket Congregational Church, and from 1856 he was a prominent and active member of that religious organization, contributing most liberally for its support, and its numerous allied interests, at one time subscribing ten thousand dollars in liquidation of the church debt. Broad as the world was the scope of his interests and sympathies. He gave freely of his means for home and foreign missions; his public gifts were widely known and appreciated, and his life was replete with deeds of benevolence and quiet acts of every day charity.

In May, 1839, Mr. Goff was married to Sarah Lee, a daughter of Israel Lee, of Dighton, Mass. Of the companionship of this wife he was early bereft by her death, and her only child also died. He was afterward married to Harriet Lee, a sister of his former wife, and the children by this marriage are Darius L., Lyman B., and Sarah C., wife of Thomas Sedgwick Steele, of Hartford, Connecticut.

## Esek H. Pierce.

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Mr. Pierce was born in Swansea, Mass., January 25, 1830, of Pilgrim stock, his ancestry being among the most worthy people of Plymouth Colony. A farmer's son, he had the usual district school opportunities of that day, removing to Rehoboth in 1841. Mr. Pierce was a bright pupil, made the most of his advantages, and qualified himself to teach school, following this useful work for eleven years; after which he engaged in mercantile pursuits and in farming. His character and experience naturally fitted him for public business, and the confidence of the people in his ability and integrity gave him a large share of probate work and the settlement of estates. He has been a member of the school committee of Rehoboth, and a tax collector for five years. He has been a life-long Republican, and was elected to the Massachusetts General Court in 1892 from the Tenth District, serving on the Committee on Harbors and Public Lands.

Mr. Pierce is not only a public-spirited citizen and a well-read man, but he has also travelled extensively in this country and abroad. In 1891 he sailed from Boston to Liverpool; thence to Naples, to Alexandria; thence to Cairo, taking a trip up the Nile, returning to Cairo and then to Ismalia, passing through the Suez Canal to Port Said. Thence he sailed to Jaffa, and by carriage went to Jerusalem; from Jerusalem he took a horseback journey of 600 miles to Beirut, and thence to Constantinople, with a homeward trip across the Continent; reaching New York after an absence of about five months, and enriched by the gains of a most interesting and instructive tour.

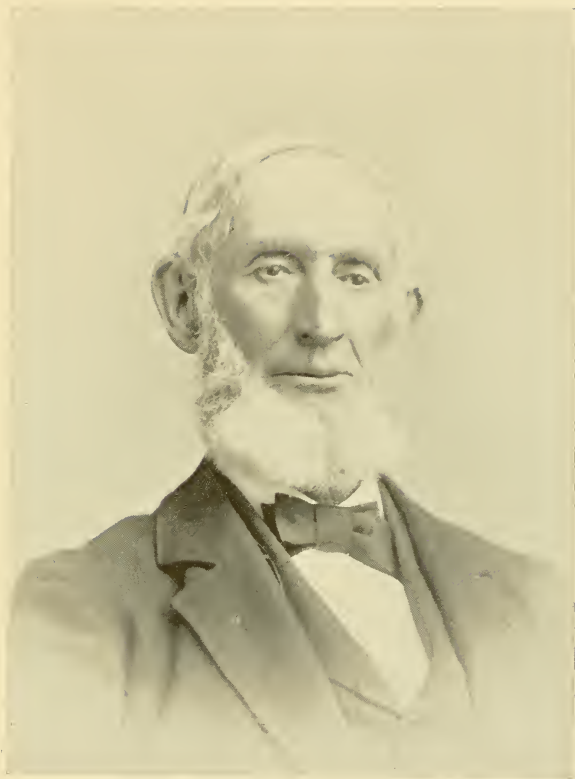
Mr. Pierce was one of the most foremost of our citizens in promoting the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Town, and as Chairman of the Committee performed his part with honor to himself and credit to the Antiquarian Society and the Town. His interest in all that relates to the preservation of the honorable history of Rehoboth and the advancement of the present condition of Town affairs is strong and influential, and the Town will always hold his services in high esteem.

### Nathaniel Baker Horton.

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Mr. N. B. Horton is one of the solid men of Rehoboth—solid physically, financially, socially, politically, influentially. He was born to a farmer's life in Rehoboth, July 25, 1820, and by habits of industry and economy has secured a handsome fortune, and by devotion to high principles of action has won the universal respect of the people. Mr. Horton owns a valuable farm of 250 acres, from which he obtains annual crops of fruits, strawberries, corn, potatoes, celery, and other vegetables.

Mr. Horton's active interest in putting down the Rebellion made him the recruiting officer of the Town during the war. He served as a Representative in the Massachusetts General Court in 1862 and 1863. He was town treasurer and tax collector for several years. He is one of the largest mill owners in Rehoboth, and is a Director in several Fall River mills. He is also interested in the coal and quarry business. He has acted as executor and administrator of many estates, and is a local banker for loaning money.



WILLIAM W. BLANDING.





In politics Mr. Horton is an ardent Republican, and in all the relations of a man and citizen he is respected and trusted by the people.

### William W. Blanding.

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The Blanding ancestry came to New England from Upton, County of Worcester, England, as early as 1640, and settled at Boston. William Blanding, the first, owned a section of land south of what is now Summer st., in the neighborhood of Hovey's dry goods store. William Blanding, 2nd, came to Rehoboth about 1660, and settled on Rocky Hill. The Carpenters had already come to Rehoboth, and the two families were united in marriage in the 3rd generation in America, bringing the best blood of the colonial settlements into one family name, the Blanding. William W. bears the name of the first progenitor, and the name also of Wheeler, one of the collateral branches of the family. William had excellent native ability—developed in one of the best New England families in rural life,—and received a fair common school education, with a few terms at private school. Brought up on a farm, he has devoted his life to this most useful and honorable occupation, and the farm on which he was born has constantly improved under his intelligent care and industry. He has caused more than two blades of grass to grow where there was only one, and may therefore be styled a real benefactor. His farm and farmhouses are samples of real enterprise, thrift, neatness and economy.

Mr. Blanding has not been an office-seeker, yet his fellow citizens have honored him with a number of public trusts, having been selectman, assessor, town and church

treasurer. He was one of the founders of the Rehoboth Antiquarian Society, and is the largest stockholder. He has been treasurer of this Society since its formation. He is an active member of the Congregational Church of Rehoboth, and is interested in all the progressive movements of the time.

### George Nelson Goff.

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The name Goff is found upon the early records of New England. Thomas Goff, a wealthy merchant of London, Eng., associated with Matthew Craddock, John Endicott, Sir Richard Saltonstall and others, were among the principal actors in laying the foundation of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. "By mutual agreement among themselves they were framed into a body politic and confirmed or rather so constituted by the royal charter." The first Gov. chosen was Matthew Craddock; the first deputy-Gov., Thomas Goff. They were sworn March 23, 1628.

The first Goff to be made a freeman by the General Court was one John, May 18, 1631. But the first Goff in Rehoboth of whom we have any authentic record was Richard, who married Martha Toogood. Their son Joseph, b. in Rehoboth 1724, m. Patience Thurber; they lived together seventy yrs. and had 14 children, one of whom, Richard, b. 1749 in Rehoboth, m. Mehitable Bullock. Richard was a manufacturer, operating a fulling mill on Palmer's River as early as Jan. 1776, but after the introduction of power looms he with other townsmen formed a manufacturing company and built the 3rd cotton mill in this country. He was also a commissioned officer under John Hancock. Two of his sons, Nelson and Darius, succeeded him in the cotton industry in Rehoboth.

George Nelson, son of Nelson and Alice (Lake) Goff was born in Rehoboth, 1837 m. Julia Bishop Horton. He is the owner and lives on the old parental homestead, which has been in possession of the family since 1714. He was raised a farmer and has always pursued that vocation, but has held various town offices and represented the 10th Bristol Representative District in 1885.

### Hon. Elisha Davis.

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Hon. Elisha Davis, son of John and Nancy Davis, was born Nov. 27th, 1831, upon the homestead in Rehoboth where he has since resided. He was educated in the public schools, and, with the exception of the season of 1860, when engaged in brick making, he has devoted himself to farming upon the paternal acres which came into his possession by inheritance and purchase in 1861, and by his eminent success in his business, has demonstrated the certainty that practical farming, when directed by intelligence and pursued with industry, can be made profitable in the Old Bay State; an object lesson in facts worth more to his wisely observing neighbors than volumes of verbal exemplifications could be. That Mr. Davis' abilities have been appreciated by his townsmen is evidenced by their having for many years chosen him to be of their board of selectmen (as they had his father many times before him) and in 1870 he was elected to represent his district—Berkley, Dighton, Rehoboth and Seekonk—in the State Legislature, besides which, he has long held the Governor's Commission as a Justice of the Peace and been largely employed in the settlement of estates in Probate.

In connection with Mr. Davis' success as a farmer and usefulness as a citizen, it deserves to be said that his estimable wife Etherinda—daughter of the late Burden and Lydia (Baker) Munroe—has been a most notable housekeeper and an exemplary helpmate in all his undertakings.

Their children are two sons, Elisha T. and Daniel E. both now engaged in active business in Chicago, and one daughter, Lydia B. the respected wife of the Rev. F. E. Bixby, pastor of the First Baptist church in Swansea, of which body, both Mr. and Mrs. Davis are dutiful members and it may well be said of them that they are typical representatives of the best citizenship in Massachusetts country life, and have kept themselves well abreast with the moral, social and industrial progress of their times and have been and are an honor to their families and the good old town of Rehoboth.

### Gustavus B. Peck.

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Gustavus B. Peck, son of Cyrus and Rebecca (Sherman) Peck, was born in Providence, at the southwest corner of John and Thayer streets, December 31, 1832. The Pecks are an old Rehoboth family, settling in that town about 1650; and their descendants are now scattered far and wide in the surrounding towns and the county at large. Mr. Peck's mother was from the Sherman stock, of Newport, one of the leading families of that city. Mr. Peck is a mason by trade, but has devoted considerable time to farming. He married Lydia J. Luther, daughter of Rodolphus and Sophia (Goff) Luther, in 1857. One daughter, Ella Rebecca Peck, was born to the parents. She died at the age of 22 years.

Mr. Peck has resided at Rehoboth Village since his marriage, and is an active member of the Congregational Church and of the Antiquarian Society. Mr. Peck rendered valuable service in connection with the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the town, and is deeply interested in all that relates to its progress.

### Ex-Gov. John W. Davis.

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The subject of this sketch was born at his father's farm-house in Rehoboth, March 7, 1826, spending the first eighteen years of his life on the farm and attending the district schools of the neighborhood as opportunity allowed. In 1844 young Davis left home to learn a mason's trade in Providence, devoting six years to that occupation; teaching public school winters or travelling as a journeyman, working at his trade in the Southern States. In 1850 he opened a grain store on South Water street, Providence, where he conducted a successful business as a grain and flour merchant for forty years, closing his active mercantile life in 1890. His business career was marked by constant industry, vigorous energy, and thorough honesty. In politics Mr. Davis is a Democrat; and, while not seeking office, he is deeply interested in the political affairs of the city, state, and nation. He was appointed by President Cleveland, in 1886, appraiser of foreign merchandise for the Providence, R.I., U. S. Customs District. In 1887 he was selected as the standard-bearer of the Democratic party for governor of Rhode Island, and was elected by a majority of about 1,100 over all other candidates. He filled the office with ability and fidelity, but was defeated 1888. He was again a candidate for governor in 1889, receiving a plurality vote of 4,400, over Herbert W. Ladd, but failing of a majority of

all the votes, as was then required. Mr. Ladd was made Governor by the General Assembly. In 1890, Mr. Davis was again candidate for Governor, received a plurality vote, and was elected by the General Assembly. In 1891, Mr. Davis again led Mr. Ladd in the popular vote as in the years 1889 and 1890, but was defeated by the General Assembly. Among the prominent outcomes of his administration as Governor of Rhode Island may be mentioned an Investigation and Reform in Prison Discipline; the Adoption of an Amendment to the State Constitution Extending the Electoral Franchise to all Citizens upon Uniform Qualifications, thus ending a long and bitter partisan controversy of many years standing; also the Adoption of a Ballot Reform Law, and the Establishment of the Rhode Island College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts.

The citizens of his adopted city, Pawtucket, have always been glad to honor him, and he represented that city in the State Senate in the years 1885, 1886 and 1890. He was also President of the Town Council in the years 1882 and 1885. In 1894 and 1895, he was a candidate for Mayor of Pawtucket, wanting only a small vote of an election.

Mr. Davis is now a member of the State House Commission, and holds other important business connections. He is highly respected by all parties for his candid expression of opinions, his strong convictions, honesty of purpose and action, and sympathetic touch with the common people, and his appreciation of the needs of society. Old Rehoboth, with her many honored sons and daughters, has great reason to be proud of her son, John W. Davis, the true citizen, the upright Senator, the able Executive of Rhode Island, the honest man.



## Thomas W. Bicknell.

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Thomas W. Bicknell, son of Allin and Harriet B. Bicknell, was born in Barrington, R. I., September 6, 1834. His education was obtained in the public schools of his native State, Rhode Island, until he was sixteen years of age.

In 1850, he entered Thetford Academy, Thetford, Vt., then under the principalship of Hiram Orcutt, LL. D., graduating from the Academy with the Greek Oration in 1853.

Mr. Bicknell passed entrance examination at Dartmouth and Amherst colleges, and entered Amherst in the Class of 1853, under the presidency of Rev. Edward Hitchcock, D.D. At the close of the first year in college he went West, teaching school one year in Illinois, and returning East, taught a high school at Rehoboth Village for two years. Prior to that he taught two terms of winter public schools at the "Old Red School-house" near Rehoboth village, and two terms of private schools at the village.

In 1857, Mr. Bicknell entered the sophomore class of Brown University, and graduated with the degree of A. M., in 1860, under the presidency of Rev. Dr. Barnas Sears. In 1859, he was elected from his native town to the House of Representatives of Rhode Island, and served in that body during his senior year in Brown University. In 1860, Mr. Bicknell was elected principal of the High School, Bristol, R. I., occupying that position five years, and the principalship of the Arnold Street Grammar School, Providence, four years.



In 1869, Mr. Bicknell was nominated by Gov. Seth Padelford as Commissioner of Public Schools of Rhode Island, and unanimously confirmed by the Rhode Island Senate, and held the office until 1875, securing,

1. The creation of a State Board of Education.
2. The re-establishment of the Rhode Island Normal School, at Providence, on a permanent basis.
3. Legislation on public libraries, and appropriations therefor.
4. Terms of office of School Committee extended from one to three years, with the election of women thereon.
5. A salaried school superintendent for each town in the State.
6. The establishment of evening schools.
7. A more vigorous enforcement of the laws relating to truancy and illiteracy.
8. A large increase in the State and town appropriations for public schools.
9. The dedication of more than fifty new school-houses, and a general improvement of the moral and material condition of school work.
10. The restoration, editing and publishing of *The Rhode Island Schoolmaster*, the State educational journal.
11. The advance of public sentiment, by public discussions, institutes, lectures, etc., in all parts of the State, and the gathering of great educational meetings, especially of the annual meeting of the Rhode Island Institute of Instruction; the audiences numbering, in the latter case, more than three thousand people.

The Board of Education pronounced the following verdict on Mr. Bicknell's State administration of schools:

“He has labored with a diligence, a wisdom, and a contagious enthusiasm, which have resulted in lasting benefit to the cause with which his name is identified.”

Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, the historian, speaks of Mr. Bicknell's “six years of eminently useful service,” of the “thoroughness and method” in his reports, of his fearlessness in presenting facts as to illiteracy and other evils, and of his wise methods for school improvement and administration.

In 1875, the various monthly educational journals of New England were united in *The New England Journal of Education*, and Mr. Bicknell was called to the editorship, and in the following year became owner and publisher as well as editor. *The Primary Teacher* was established in 1877, *Good Times* in 1878, and the bimonthly international magazine, *Education*, in 1880. All of these educational papers obtained large circulation and influence, and all have to-day a most successful mission in the educational field.

The Bureau of Education, now in charge of Dr. Hiram Orcutt, was established by Mr. Bicknell in 1876.

Mr. Bicknell's highest ability is seen in the organization and unifying of educational forces and work, and this has been recognized in the presidencies he has held in secular and religious educational organizations. As president of the Rhode Island Institute of Instruction, he awakened it to new activity and success.

While president of the American Institute of Instruction, 1876-7-8, the largest meeting ever held in New England was gathered at Fabyan's, at the White Mountains, and as one of the results, of the net income *one thousand dollars* was set apart as the Bicknell Fund.

In 1880, Mr. Bicknell was chiefly instrumental in the organization of the National Council of Education, and was its first president until 1884.

In 1884, Mr. Bicknell, as president of the National Teachers' Association of the United States, organized the plans and gathered at Madison, Wis., the largest and most noted educational meeting ever held, at that date, in this country.

Mr. Bicknell represented Massachusetts in the Interstate Congress held at Louisville, in 1883, and was president of the Interstate Commission on Federal Aid.

He was a member of the International Congress of Education, held at New Orleans, in 1886, and read two papers before that body, one on "A Plan for Federal Aid in Education," and another on "School Journalism," both of which have been published by the National Bureau of Education.

Mr. Bicknell has delivered more than six hundred lectures and addresses on educational topics, several of which have been published in current educational literature, and has spoken on education in nearly every State in the country. His addresses on "School Supervision," before the American Institute of Instruction, in 1874, and on "Civil Service Reform in Education," have been published by the American Institute.

Mr. Bicknell has travelled extensively throughout the United States; has visited the South several times, and addressed the people and teachers on education; and has visited Europe three times, to make himself familiar with the educational systems, life, character, and history of the people. He was a Commissioner from Rhode Island to the

World's Exposition at Vienna in 1873. He was elected president of the International Sunday School Convention, held at Louisville in 1884, and was a Massachusetts delegate to the Raikes S. S. Centennial in London in 1880. He was selected by Dr. J. H. Vincent to organize the Chautauqua Teachers' Reading Union, in 1886.

Mr. Bicknell was elected from the largest Republican ward in Boston to the House of Representatives of Massachusetts in November, 1888, and in 1889, was Chairman of the Committee on Education and Woman's Suffrage, an honor which the Boston *Herald* says was most appropriately bestowed.

Mr. Bicknell married in 1860 Miss Amelia D. Blanding, daughter of Christopher Blanding, of Rehoboth. He has taken a great interest in the affairs of the town, and may be considered as one of its truest friends.

His wife, Mrs. Amelia D., gave five hundred dollars for the foundation of the Blanding Library, of Rehoboth, to be named in honor of her parents, Christopher and Chloe (Carpenter) Blanding, of Rehoboth.

Mr. Bicknell is now (1896) a resident of Providence, R. I., taking an active part in the business, political and educational interests of the city and his native State.

## Brief Sketches of Some Distinguished Settlers and Sons of Rehoboth.

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JOHN BROWN, one of the original proprietors and founders of Rehoboth, was born in England ; in his youth travelled in Holland where he became acquainted with the Pilgrims ; came to Plymouth in the early days of the Colony ; was made a freeman in 1634 ; was elected to the office of Assistant in Plymouth Colony in 1636, and held the place for seventeen years ; was one of the Commissioners of the United Colonies of New England from 1644 to 1655 ; was the owner of large estates in Rehoboth and Wannamoisett, now Barrington and East Providence ; and was captain of the Swansea militia ; built the house in which he lived till his death, on the Main Road, near Riverside, East Providence ; died April 10, 1662, and was buried at the Little Neck Burial Ground, near Bullock's Cove. Mr. Brown was liberal in religion and was the first magistrate who opposed compelling the people to support the ministry, offering to pay the taxes of those who should refuse. He was an able, conscientious, noble, Godfearing man, and his life was a blessing to the town and colony.

THOMAS WILLETT was one of the founders of Rehoboth, as well as one of the most distinguished men of Old Plymouth Colony. Born in England, he spent his early years, as did Mr. Brown, in Holland, where he learned the Dutch language, manners and customs, and became acquainted with the Pilgrims. He was about nineteen years



GUSTAVUS B. PECK.





old when he landed at Plymouth in 1629. He had charge of the English trading port at Kennebec, Maine. Mr. Willett married Mary Brown, daughter of John Brown, July 6, 1636, by whom he had eight children. In 1647, he succeeded Myles Standish as Captain of the Plymouth militia. In 1651, he was elected one of the Governor's Assistants and held the office till 1665, when he was succeeded by his brother-in-law, James Brown, of Swansea. He was appointed as Agent of the Colony in organizing the government at New York and reducing affairs to English Customs and as a result was chosen to be the first governor or Mayor of the town and was re-elected to the position. The Dutch also had so much confidence in Mr. Willett that they chose him to arbitrate on the disputed boundary between New York and New Haven. In February, 1660, Mr. Willett became a free holder in Rehoboth, residing at Wannamoisett, then a part of the wardship of Rehoboth, but within the territory of Sowams or Sowamsett. The chimney of his house is now standing on the main road, near Riverside, R. I., and not far from the home of his father-in-law, Honorable John Brown.

Mr. Willett cultivated friendly relations with the Indians and made Purchase of Rehoboth North Purchase, (now the Attleboro and Cumberland) Taunton North Purchase (Norton and Mansfield) and other large tracts. For his services to Rehoboth, the town, on the 21st of February 1660, voted "that Mr. Willett should have liberty to take five hundred or six hundred

acres of land northward or eastward, beyond the bounds of our town, where he shall think it most convenient for himself." With John Myles and John Brown, he was influential in the grant and settlement of the town of Swansea, and the foundation of the Baptist Church in that town, under the pastorate of Rev. Mr. Myles, the ancestor of Major General Nelson A. Myles, U. S. A.

After a few years residence in New York, Mr. Willett returned to his home in Wannamoisett, where he closed a useful and honored life, August 4, 1674, aged 63 years. A rough stone in the Little Neck Burial Ground at the head of Bullock's Cove, bear this inscription :

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1674.

Here lyeth the body of the worthy Thomas Willett, Esq.,  
Who died August ye 4th, in the 64th year of his age.  
Anno——.

WHO WAS THE FIRST MAYOR  
OF NEW YORK,  
AND TWICE DID SUSTAIN THE PLACE.

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His wife, Mary, died in 1669, and is buried by his side.

REV. SAMUEL NEWMAN, the founder and first pastor of the Congregational Church, which now bears his name, was the most distinguished of the Rehoboth founders and one of the most noted of the early ministers of New England. His Concordance, a work of great learning and vast labor, testifies to the intellectual and spiritual quality of the man.

His life and labors have been so frequently written and are so familiar to all the sons of Rehoboth that it is not necessary to repeat the story.

**BENJAMIN WEST, L.L. D.** This noted mathematician, philosopher and patriot was born in Rehoboth, in the year 1730. His grandfather came from England and settled in the south part of the town, near the Swansea line. He was an astronomer and occupied a professorship in Boston University from 1788 to 1798. He was postmaster of Providence in 1802, and filled the office until his death, in 1813, in the 83rd year of his age.

**REV. JOSEPHUS WHEATON, A.M.**, was a native of Rehoboth, the son of Capt. Joseph and Mrs. Sarah A. Wheaton. He graduated at Brown University, 1812; was a tutor for two years; was pastor of Congregational Church in Holliston, Mass., till his death in 1825, at the age of thirty-seven.

**HORATIO G. WHEATON, M. D.**, brother of Josephus, graduated at Brown University in 1820, and died at Charleston, S. C., a victim of yellow fever, 1824. "He was a scholar of fine talents and a young man of high promise."

**NATHAN SMITH, M. D.**, professor in the medical schools of Dartmouth, Yale and Bowdoin Colleges, was born at Rehoboth 1762. An account of his life will be found in Bliss' History of Rehoboth.

**SAMUEL METCALF FOWLER**, for some years the able editor of the Pawtucket Chronicle, was a son of

Dr. Isaac Fowler, of Rehoboth. He was editor and proprietor of the Chronicle until his death, in 1832, at the age of 27 years.

PETER BROWN HUNT, ESQ., was born in Rehoboth, now Seekonk, February 1, 1794, graduated at Brown University in 1816; was admitted to Massachusetts and Rhode Island bars; commenced practice 1819; died 1831.

HON. JAMES ELLIS, son of Rev. John Ellis, graduated at Brown University 1791, commenced practice of law in Rehoboth; removed to Taunton, and held the office of County Attorney.

JAMES BLISS, M. D., born in Rehoboth, 1757. Studied medicine with Drs. Brownson and Blackinton; was a successful practitioner in Rehoboth for many years. He married Hannah Guild, of Attleboro, by whom he had twelve children. At the age of 19, he was surgeon's mate in Col. Carpenter's Regiment, in the war of the Revolution. "He was a man of sound judgment, strict integrity and great industry and economy." He died in 1834.

GEORGE W. BLISS, M. D., son of Capt. Asa and Mrs. Polly Bliss, received a medical diploma at Brown University in 1822, and died in 1829, aged 39 years.

DARIUS CARPENTER, M. D., born at Rehoboth, 1785, studied medicine with Dr. Bolton; commenced practice in 1816, died 1833.

ROYAL CARPENTER, M. D., born at Rehoboth, studied medicine with Dr. Isaac Fowler; commenced practice in 1808; married in 1834.

DRAPER CARPENTER, M. D., son of Daniel Carpenter, born in Rehoboth, 1791, graduated Brown University, 1821; commenced practice in 1827.

BENONI CARPENTER, M. D., born at Rehoboth, 1805; graduated Brown University, 1829; received degree M. D. at University of Pennsylvania, commenced practice in Pawtucket, 1832.

COL. ABRAHAM BLANDING, born at Rehoboth, 1775, graduated Brown University and studied law with Judge Brevord, of Camden, S. C., where he commenced the practice of law; removed to Columbia, S. C.; married first wife Miss Betsy Martin, of Camden, and for his second wife Mary Caroline Desaussure, of Columbia.

WILLIAM BLANDING, M. D., born at Rehoboth, 1773, graduated at Brown University, 1801; studied medicine, and practiced at Attleboro and Camden, S. C. Married Susan Carpenter, of Rehoboth, who died 1809, afterwards Rachel Wellett, of Philadelphia. His estate at Rehoboth is now owned by William W. Blanding.

DR. ABRAM BLANDING, son of James Blanding, Esq., born in Rehoboth 1823, graduated from the Homeopathic Medical College in Philadelphia, 1850. Began practice of his profession in the West in 1856; was a surgeon in the army from 1861 to 1865; went to Florida and resided at Palmer until his death in 1892, in his 70th year. He joined the Congregational Church, Rehoboth, in 1843.

REV. SYLVESTER S. BUCKLIN, was a Congregational minister.

REV. AUGUSTUS B. REED, son of Dea. Augustus Reed, was a Congregational minister.

THOMAS KINNICUTT, ESQ., was a lawyer at Worcester, Mass.

GEORGE A. BUCKLIN, M. D., graduated Brown University 1824; first read law and then studied medicine with Dr. Wells, of Columbia, S. C.; died 1829, on his journey from New Orleans to Texas.

SHUBAL PECK, graduated Brown University; died soon after graduation.

JOHNSON GARDNER, M. D., son of James Gardner, of Rehoboth, born 1799; a student at Brown University; studied medicine with Dr. Lewis Wheaton, of Providence, and received degrees of M. D., 1824; married Phebe L. Sisson, 1829, was a practicing physician in Pawtucket, R. I.

ZENAS BLISS, A. M., son of Jonathan Bliss, read law but became a manufacturer and lived in Johnson, R. I. His son, Zenas Bliss, is a graduate of West Point Military School and is now a Brigadier General in the United States Army, 1895.

WILLIAM BLANDING CARPENTER, M. D., born 1810, graduated Brown University, 1829, with salutatory addresses, studied medicine with Dr. Parsons, Providence; died 1830. Was a student of great promise.

EDWARD P. BROWN, the son of Dea. E. A. Brown, of Rehoboth, was born about the year 1848, prepared for college at the Rehoboth High School, then under the charge of Thomas W. Bicknell; at

Thetford Academy, Thetford, Vt., and at the University Grammar School, Providence, R. I.; entered Brown University in 1859; enlisted as private in a Rhode Island Regiment in 1862, returned in 1865, with the rank of Major by brevet; graduated from the University in class of 1867, from Harvard Law School in 1869; entered on practice of law at North Attleboro, Mass., and removed to Boston in 1870; built up a valuable business and was a member of the General Court from Boston for three years; conducted the celebrated case of General and Governor Benj. F. Butler, vs. the managers of the Tewksbury Alms House, in behalf of that institution and won the verdict of acquittal of the charges made by the Governor; is now conducting a general law business in the City of New York. (1895)

HON. JEREMIAH W. HORTON, of Newport, R. I., is one of Rehoboth's most promising and successful sons. He is the son of Tamerlane Horton and obtained his education in the schools of Rehoboth including several terms at the High School. He is now (1895) a successful merchant in Newport; has been honored by an election to the mayoralty of the city, (1893) declining a re-election; he has also been colonel of the Newport Artillery and is now a representative to the General Assembly from that city. He is a public spirited citizen and his character and attainments reflect honor upon his family and native town.

EDGAR PERRY, ESQ., is one of the brightest and ablest of the younger sons of Rehoboth. He has had the



education and training of a journalist, graduating from an Attleboro paper to the Cleveland Press, and thence advancing to the Boston Herald. He is Boston correspondent of the New York Tribune and other papers, and his future is full of hope and success. He was one of the main movers in the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the town and as a member of the Committee of Arrangements was most efficient in making it a successful occasion.

THE GOFFS AS MANUFACTURERS. The biographical notice of Mr. Darius Goff gives an account of his relation to the manufacturing interests of Rehoboth, but fails to state the work of his ancestors in utilizing the water power of the village tributary to Palmer's River. The fact is that Joseph Goff, of Rehoboth, used the water-power of this stream, at or near the village, for sawing lumber and other mill purposes prior to the year 1764. His son, Richard Goff, used the power of the same stream for running a fulling mill prior to January 1776. His sons, Nelson and Darius, succeeded their father, Richard, in the use of the same stream, in operating the mill of the Rehoboth Union Manufacturing Company, and still further in the erection of a mill prior to 1840 for the manufacture of batting and wadding which was one of the first of its class in the country. Lyman and Darius Goff, of Pawtucket, the sons of Darius, are the fourth generation of manufacturers from Joseph, who harnessed the runaway waters of Palmer's River to practical uses, one hundred and thirty-one years ago.

OTHER IMPORTANT MANUFACTURING INTERESTS. The men who first formed the Rehoboth Union Manufacturing Company were Dexter Wheeler, Richard Goff, Stephen Carpenter, Thomas Carpenter, James Carpenter and Peter Carpenter. The building was erected at Rehoboth Village in 1809, and the machinery was introduced for manufacturing yarns. The number of spindles was 360, run by 14 hands, making 550 pounds of yarn a week. James Carpenter was first agent, succeeded by David Anthony, William Marvel and Dea. E. A. Brown.

This mill was afterwards owned and operated by Nelson and Darius Goff and Stephen Carpenter.

The Cotton factory, at Orleans Village, Rehoboth, was built in the year 1811, the principal stockholders being Asa Bullock, Bernard Wheeler, Capt. Israel Nichols, of Rehoboth, Thomas Church, John Howe and Capt. Benjamin Norris, of Bristol, and Richmond Bullock, of Providence. In 1825, David Wilkinson bought the property and put in new machinery consisting of 48 looms with spindles and preparations to supply them. This is said to be the first successful attempt to use spindles called mules for warp as well as woof in the manufacture of fine cloths for calico printing. It is a matter of interesting record that Dexter Wheeler and David Anthony, of Rehoboth, were among the first founders of the manufacturing interests of the City of Fall River, Mass., and that they were part owners of the first cotton factory erected in that city.



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